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LULLABY

By Ethna MacCarthy

Sleep baby sleep
while sleep is simple.
Frustration only opens your eyes,
and the long discomfort of living
is still a vague surmise.

That idle trollop, the spinning moon,
staggering round the empty skies,
like a drunken midwife, far too soon
waked your coming ;
glistening with pallid sweat she swoons.
Baby shut your eyes.

Rushlight will be your nightlight now,
but the moon will come back again,
stately and sober visitor,
impartial nurse to your new found pain.

Sleep little baby sleep,
for the nightlight will grow so tall ;
four white tapers around your bed
gossiping over your new linen shawl ;
two at your feet
and two at your head.

There is no moon, for fog and damp
 submerge the city
 and giant cobwebs hang
 from lamp to lamp.
 The river out of pity
 smuggles decently
 its pauper cargo,
 shrouded in mist,
 past the customs
 out to sea.

Each night the drag nets of the tide
 take the shattered moon
 beyond the harbour bar,
 but she, reluctant suicide,
 nibbles her freedom and returns
 to climb beside the nearest star.
 One clear night endures her pain
 to plunge to baptism again.

Sleep baby sleep
 and sleeping thrive.
 Your gentle mother
 caught a mouse
 and burned it on the hearth alive.

Sleep baby sleep.
 They will give you toys,
 books and a rainbow to paradise
 and two penny coins
 to lay on your eyes.

Prolong your interrupted dream ; postpone
 the age distraught
 when you will scour all zones
 of street and thought
 to find
 false hibernation for the mind
 and fail,
 joining the addicts whom
 no drug can lull,

nor dream atone
 when winter opens its grim jail;
 lusting alone for the soft cocoon
 of death to dull
 the atrocious cancer of despair
 that first bereaves the heart
 and then the bone.

Sleep baby sleep
 and do not cry.
 You are so young
 your eyes are dry.
 You have no skill
 yet to distill
 the precious tears,
 silver handsel
 of the sentient years.

Sleep baby sleep
 till through the snows
 the crocus and the primrose break,
 ancestors of those
 who, for your sake,
 one far off spring,
 will flower,
 when you awake
 to love, and know
 the piteous lovely world
 is in your power.

Two Poems by Peter Wells

THE DEATH OF NEPTUNE

Under the motions of the stars he sits
 As blossoms fall between the wandering waves.
 In the ecstatic harbour voices drop their pearls into the water
 And the silent wrecks drift through their own reflection.

The trident in his hand broken and rusted
 The fishes navigate their tortuous courses
 Among the weeds that trail from his exhausted horses.

Under the motions of the stars he sits
 As the waves toil with the waterfall in the mountain
 And in the distant echoes of the night
 Rains the quiet music of a solitary fountain.

The shell wherein he is, like Venus
 When she sees killed the valiant young Adonis,
 Curls its sad lip. The horses shake their harness.

Beneath the stars that travel in a heaven
 Black as the ocean on which he has driven
 He sits with all his olden glory broken.

From under trees come girls to gather flowers
 That float past on the waves of lonely hours.

The pale horses champ at their bits and falter
 While foam like snow descends upon the great god's altar.

In the ecstatic harbour voices drop their pearls into the water
 And the silent wrecks drift through their own reflection.

CLEOPATRA

With the hills of Rome among her breasts sleeping,
 She buries a slain Caesar in her arms.
 She sips her wine, and white as milk her hands
 In her silk skirt seek the drunken Antony.
 Over her bed she rears the eternal city
 While dark and fragrant Egypt guards her dreams.

The morning Nile flows around her feet
 She bathes forgotten kisses from her face.
 Seeing the sails of her ships in the jealous sky drown
 Antony, whose anger flew like an asp,
 She clasps death's broken necklace to her lips.

Three Poems by Y. L.

I.

Downcast is the plum's pale drift,
 The golden trump of March ;
 Rose under sky of apple-trees
 And withdrawn April smiles,
 The lilac burden of the wind
 And dance of darkness on my page :
 These are the promised tendril joys,
 The dragonflies that skim the stream
 Where sorrow curves the day along,
 And music afar would pluck at death
 In wonder of its unopen'd flower.
 Then night and day and glancing spring
 Betray that life is an errant wind
 Troubling the still immortal ways.

II.

A blackbird scrapes the sun-flecked air,
 Scales drip the warm-clawed bark like dew
 And memory ebbs and prints their joy.
 The sober flood of heavy trees
 And sharp-set stream in early flowers
 O'erbear the vagrant emptiness ;
 The golden flame has plashed its light
 In these green-shaken insect moats.
 But songs have thorns
 And fountains quench,
 The winter pules in summer sighs
 And shadows turn their casting-net
 On gall and fret of loveliness :
 Dearest trove of coining night.

III.

Be still, O heart, to the splintered dawn
 Of opal leaves and flickering song,
 And swans uncurled and webs glass-spun
 Where bright-laved are the slender feet.

Be still, O heart, to the rain's flute
And echoes of the burnet wood,
The falling hours of golden sand
And moments posed in stalactite.

Be still, O heart, in wandering world.
Untrodden are the nearest cliffs
For sight and sound are a mocking drift
And dreams are all its straws and brick.

Be still, O heart, to this thy end.
The dark edge is full radiancy,
The muted sound the singing bough,
And these thy ribs are astral-spaced.
Be still. The world now lives in thee.

SWIFT'S ORDINATION, 1694-5

By H. Teerink

SWIFT'S finished works have always been praised for their logical reasoning; but in his hasty, unrevised sketches we may sometimes find examples of the contrary. Here is one from his *Fragment of Autobiography*, quoted from his holograph in T.C.D.:

"Mr Swift lived with him [Sir William Temple] some time but resolving to settle himself in some way of living, was inclined to take orders. However, although his fortune was very small, he had a Scruple of entring into the Church meerly for Support, and S^r W^m Temple then being Master of the Rolls in Ireland offered him an Employ of about 120^l a year in that office, whereupon Mr Swift told him, that since he had now an opportunity of living without being driven into the Church for a maintenance, he was resolved to go to Irel^d and take holy Orders."

It has always been incomprehensible to me that, as far as I know, Swift's biographers have never raised any objection to this passage, apparently accepting it on the face of the words, and considering it sound reasoning.

It is clear that Swift was on the look-out for an independent livelihood, and that he had turned his thoughts towards the Church. This was in 1694, but the idea was not a new one; more than a year before, on November 29, 1692, he had written to his uncle William:

"I am not to take orders till the King gives me a prebendary; and Sir William Temple, though he promises me the certainty of it, yet is less forward than I could wish, because I suppose, he believes I shall leave him, and, upon some accounts, he thinks me a little necessary to him [at present]." (cf. Dr. F. Elrington Ball, *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, I, 10).

But it is also clear that his inclination towards the Church cannot have been a whole-hearted one, for in the *Fragment* he adds that "he had a Scruple of entring into the Church meerly for Support," or, as he expresses it later, he did not like the idea of "being driven into the Church for a maintenance." For a man either *does* feel the true vocation, or he does *not*. If he *does*, he will follow his inclination, and need not feel any scruple about taking the emoluments as well. And if he does *not*—Swift's inclination was at best a negative one—he will either refuse to take the step altogether, or take the consequences and reason that, having no other choice, he is simply obliged by the difficulty of his position (i.e. his poverty) to do what, properly speaking, he does not like. But to say in this predicament that he "was inclined to take orders", is a distorted representation of the truth.

Commenting on this, Craik in his *Life of Jonathan Swift*, 2nd edition, 1894, I. 57-60—and Craik may be fairly taken as representing the view of all the other biographers—says that Swift “hesitated to break with Temple and secure [his] independence in the only way open to him, until he found he could do it without the suspicion, to himself or to others, of a merely mercenary motive.” And he goes on to say that in this dilemma Swift felt obliged “to do what he hated, to press his patron for help”; after which Temple offered him a clerkship of about £120 a year “in his own sinecure office of the Rolls in Dublin.”

Craik’s words contain the definite statement that the initiative came from Swift, but it may be remarked that the *Fragment* only says that Temple made the offer. Therefore the question may be asked: Was it really Swift who broached the subject, and had he a pre-concerted idea of what would happen, namely, that Temple would offer him the clerkship, which he might then refuse as meaning no independence, after which he might with some show of reason announce his resolution to go to Ireland and take holy orders? And could he then say to himself that he need not fear the pangs of his conscience, nor the criticism of others, because he had done what he could not avoid? Craik apparently did not realize that his words contained a charge of downright hypocrisy, a vice Swift detested all his life, as his works show in many places. Therefore I think it far safer to assume that not Swift, but Temple, was the initiator. And here another question suggests itself: Was Temple’s offer a sinecure itself, requiring no attendance in Dublin? Probably it was, for in that case Temple might at least have cherished a reasonable expectation or hope that Swift would accept it, abandon the plan of the Church altogether, be satisfied, and stay on with his patron as his secretary, which would have been in accordance with Temple’s wish (“he thinks me a little necessary to him”). Whereas in the other case Temple would have played a dangerous game, because of the chance of Swift accepting it and leaving him, which would have been contrary to his desire.

However this may be, we know the result. Swift’s answer must have astounded Temple, not only for the refusal of the offer, but also for its want of logic. For a man of Swift’s power of clear reasoning to say that he had now a livelihood which would not drive him into the Church (but which he refused because it did not mean independence), and give it as a reason for going into

the Church all the same, is a justification hard to understand. It is what a man might *feel*, but would not *express* without the danger of laying himself open to the charge of pure sophistry.

In conclusion I may be allowed to suggest an interpretation which has long been in my mind, entirely different from the commonly accepted one. As I cannot adduce any evidence for it, I submit it for what it is worth :

The word 'meerly' does not define 'for Support,' but belongs to 'entring into the Church'; or in other words, Swift's 'Scruple' did not concern his conscience, but was of a financial nature. The passage in question would then mean: he had an inclination towards the Church, but he did not think a church-living sufficient to support him. The addition 'although his fortune was very small' may then be interpreted as meaning: properly speaking he should not have had that objection, for beggars cannot be choosers. Then Temple, no doubt knowing of the dilemma, made his offer, which was not refused, but accepted by Swift. But at the same time the latter told his master that, though grateful, because he now had a way of living without being driven into the Church for a maintenance without any further income, he was not fully satisfied, because it meant no independence, and that therefore he was resolved to go to Ireland, take holy orders, and seek preferment as well. It need not surprise us that hearing this, Temple was angry, revoked his offer, and that soon after they parted in an anything but friendly mood (cf. *Correspondence*, I, 12).

This explanation has at least the advantage of leaving no room for the charges of hypocrisy and sophistry.

BROTHER JOSEPH AND THE BISHOP

By Desmond Clarke

BROTHER JOSEPH walked slowly down the garden path, an empty honey crate under each arm. He was an old man with a great tuft of curly white hair almost hiding the faded biretta perched on the top of his head. His fat round face, bronzed with the sun, was creased with a happy smile, and his bright little eyes under shaggy eyebrows were like two little wells of water buried in his face.

Brother Joseph was a happy man even though he was old and not many years from the grave. There were a lot of things he might have regretted, one of these was that he was no longer young, but that did not worry him really, rather the fact that his wits were not as sharp as they used be, that his hands were getting a bit stiff in themselves, a little shaky, and he grew tired easily. He didn't like the thought of being a useless old man, incapable of doing things ; it was much more pleasant to be able to move about, pother in the garden when he felt like it, and then spend all his waking and unpraying hours watching his bees. So long as he could do these things he was happy and life was infinitely good and beautiful.

Brother Joseph was tired when he reached the apiary. The two crates under his arms seemed to add to the weight of his years. He laid them gently on the ground and sat down on a seat.

It was a warm day, almost too warm. The sun was high up in the heavens and threw no long shadows across the grass. Easily knowing it was a warm day, for the air was alive with bees, just masses of them pouring in and out of the hives, flopping down on the alighting boards weighted with nectar and pollen. And at the entrances to the hives bees stood fanning with fast moving wings, whilst the young bees as yet unable to forage climbed up the face of the hives and covered them thickly.

Brother Joseph watched them for a while wondering in his own mind whether some of his hives might throw out swarms. But it was much too early in the year for swarms ; besides, Brother Joseph through years of careful study had mastered his bees so that they no longer emerged from his hives in great swarms. " 'Tis the heat," he muttered, and he took a large red handkerchief from the endless folds of his soutane and mopped his face. He mopped the top of his head where the biretta sat for there was just a small bald spot for all the world like a large shining egg in a nest.

He was puffing a little, still somewhat tired and out of wind from the walk. Strange how he felt so tired recently, the slightest little walk, or work in the garden or handling of his bees made him tired. And this feeling of tiredness had come quite suddenly ; he had only experienced it during the past few days. For a moment the thought lay heavy on his mind but with a shrug of his shoulder and a monkey-like grimace he dismissed it from his mind. " 'Tis old you're getting, Joseph, old and short in the wind," he said

half aloud. "You must remember old boy that you cannot do things you used do twenty or thirty years ago, even five years ago, me son." And he nodded his head up and down.

But as Brother Joseph sat and watched his bees he smiled. Thank God he could still take an interest in things, potter a bit in the garden, handle his bees better than an expert, understand them and all their strange ways so that they never harmed him or caused him to feel uneasy in their midst. Yes, thank God he had something to keep his mind and body occupied. If he hadn't there would be no place for him except St. Michael's where all the old brothers went to die when their life of usefulness was past.

Brother Joseph breathed a deep sigh of contentment. By all the laws of life he should have been in St. Michael's this ten years back. Indeed, if he hadn't had his own way that is where he would have been. He remembered well the day Brother Superior told him that a new young Brother would take over his classes. He was getting a little old and was no longer capable of controlling boys. It was a hard, terrible blow to him. He was not even expecting it. Of course he could still teach the younger children, there was nothing difficult about that, but . . . yes, the children were noisy, difficult to control and somehow his temper had got a little out of bounds. Not to teach any more! What was there left in life if he could not teach, if he could not do what he had done for almost fifty years? Boys, boys, fifty years of boys and then

Brother Joseph nodded his head, the fat little grin spreading over his face. He was not sent to St. Michaels. They kept him; he did not mind being just a lay-brother so long as he could see the boys, hear their shouts and chatter in the playground, and fill in his day helping in the garden. Then the bees came to fill his time. First a swarm hanging on an apple tree like an old brown stocking, and a butter box as an improvised hive. From that a real hive and then more hives until the little apiary at the back of the garden had a dozen freshly coloured hives, gleaming white in the springtime sun. And all during the winter the brothers ate honey on their bread instead of jam, and praised Brother Joseph for his industry. That always pleased him and gave him an opportunity to talk about his bees and invite the Brothers down to see them; he could talk and talk about them, rambling on to the point of boredom. Often the Brothers came to see him work in his apiary, wondering how the old white-haired man

could break these busy little insects to his will so that they became quiet and docile in his hands. He wore no veil or gloves to protect himself, and the bees crawled about his hands and face and gathered thickly on his soutane, and if they stung him nobody ever knew or saw any hurtful swellings. But the bees did not sting him because he was slow and gentle in his movements, and scarcely moved even when they flew in a black cloud to his face. The apparent ease with which he handled his bees gave all the Brothers confidence so they could stand quite near and watch him.

The sun high in the sky poured down a flood of heat. Brother Joseph blew out a great puff of wind and mopped his face again. In the distance he could hear the rising voices of the children as they tumbled out of the classrooms to the playground for the midday break. The loud discordant voices sounded like soft music to Brother Joseph. Any other day he would have hurried back to the playground holding the skirt of his soutane so that he could walk quicker. But to-day he felt too tired and the heat of the sun was drying up all the energy in his body. Instead he let his eyes close slowly and in a moment his head was dropping until his chin rested on his snuff-stained stock.

In his sleep-dulled mind he could still hear the children laugh and shout and then the voices faded away and there was the solid quiet of the classroom. A little sigh dropped from the corner of Brother Joseph's mouth. He was back in the classroom again, looking down at the sea of upturned faces, expectant, bored, earnest and playful faces. There were pale pinched faces, full round faces with apple red cheeks; bright intelligent faces, dull heavy and stupid faces, vacuous and unfathomable like a great bottomless pit. Faces did not count for much really, for they were all children—God's little children and they all sat in Brother Joseph's classroom. It was a big classroom with no end wall or if there was it could not be seen for it stretched back, back where he could not see. And before him there was an army of children, a great uncountable army, rows upon rows stretching back and back, far away.

"All my children," Brother Joseph muttered in his sleep. "All mine." And suddenly all the children were men, marching by him like soldiers before their leader. Some had rows and rows of medals—those who had made a mark in life, who had become great; then there were more with just a few medals, many more

and they were the ordinary people who ambled along comfortably seeking neither richness or greatness, and then there were those with no medals, no fine clothes, they were ragged and dishevelled and they walked slowly, the outcasts, those who had fallen out with life and their fellow men.

Brother Joseph gave a sharp, quick little sigh when he saw these men. He was not disappointed with them, life was hard and there was not room for everybody at the top, even he himself had failed. He was just a lowly laybrother now, working in the garden and minding bees, just as lowly as the lowliest of his boys. Whether they were amongst the great, or the middling, or the forgotten it did not matter, they were all his children, and if they failed—well, wasn't he in some measure responsible, mustn't he have neglected something, that bit of advice or help that might have made the difference?

Brother Joseph must have slept for quite a while. When he opened his eyes the sun seemed to have gone. He looked up to the sky blinking his sleepy eyes. There was still a great ceiling of blue overhead but it was flecked here and there with billowy clouds and over the face of the sun a large cloud swept majestically, blown full like the sails of a ship caught in the wind.

"O, dear me," Brother Joseph muttered, "I must have fallen asleep." He fumbled in his deep pocket for his snuff box, a little dirty brown leather affair like a matchbox. He gathered a good pinch of snuff between his thumb and finger and pressed it well up each of his hairy nostrils, sniffing loudly. He could feel his head clearing, getting kind of light and free so that he took a long deep breath and blew it out slowly again with grand enjoyment. He rubbed his thumb and finger against each other, and then brushed his hands together, finally he flicked the crumbs of snuff from his front.

He got up slowly from his seat; he felt a little stiff and mildly stretched himself.

The bees were working steadily in all his hives, tumbling in the entrances with abandoned eagerness, gathering all the pollen they could in the warm sunshine. The sight of the coloured pollen, in thick balls on their legs, pleased Brother Joseph for he knew his queens were busy filling hundreds of little cells with brood.

Brother Joseph approached the first hive in the row. Slowly and carefully he removed the lid and the covering. Over the tops of the frames he saw the bees well up like a spring breaking from

the ground ; hundreds and hundreds of bees, their little yellow and black bodies gleaming brightly. One or two bees flew up at him angrily as though resenting his intrusion on their privacy, but Brother Joseph did not move. He stood still, his small vein-knotted hands resting gently on either edge of the hive. The bees flew in front of his face, making an angry noise ; they hovered about him for a while and then flew off. Other bees clambered over the tops of the frames crawled over his hands, some stopping to rub their wings with their hind legs.

Very slowly and stiffly he bent low over the hives, almost holding his breath, and then carefully he picked one frame after another and held it before his face, examining the thick cluster of bees with slow deliberation. Carefully each frame was returned to its place, then the empty crate was placed on top, the covering clothes and the lid.

When he had finished with the first hive he noticed that he was a little over-wrought as though the examination of the hive had been a great strain. It had always been a slight strain for it meant slow careful and deliberate movement, nothing hurried or jerky, but he never felt all tied up as it were, taut and stretched, so that there was no elasticity about his body, no freedom of movement, just as if he were a kind of wooden doll.

Brother Joseph waited a few moments before he opened the next hive. After each hive he felt the same over wrought sensation, the same feeling of tautness. Stranger still his hands seemed to be getting clumsy, as if he had no fingers, only thumbs that could not hold or grip things properly.

When he came to the second last hive, he dropped the frame of bees rather roughly into its place, killing a few bees and irritating many. Two of them alighted on his hand as he drew it back quickly and tethered themselves to his flesh with their stings. He brushed the bees from the back of his hand and quickly squeezed out the stings. He stood for a long time looking at the little weals gathering on the back of his hand, and spreading out like the ever widening circles on a disturbed sheet of water. As he looked at the wounded flesh he shook his head from side to side. These were the first stings he had had for years, almost since he started bee-keeping. "Strange," he muttered. "Strange indeed." Then as if to comfort himself he thought, "Well, perhaps the day is too hot, besides I shouldn't have slept, it never did a body any good sleeping during God's good working hours."

As he reached down for the lid of the hive, he heard footsteps coming down the gravelled path from the garden. He replaced the lid a little hurriedly and turned round.

It was Brother Superior.

"Ah! Brother, I thought I'd find you down here among your pets," he said kindly.

Brother Joseph smiled and looked at the tall square-shouldered Superior with the firm aggressive face, even his smile was purposeful.

"You certainly have a lovely day to enjoy the peace and quiet of the garden," Brother Superior went on, "I can assure you 'tis much more pleasant than the repressive silence of the classroom and a modicum of sunshine through an open window."

"Yes. Yes, I suppose so," Brother Joseph said thoughtfully, adding, "But when the sun is not shining the whispering of the classroom is much more pleasant than the silence of one's own company."

Brother Superior nodded his head, dug his hands deep into the pockets of his soutane, stuck out his chest and inhaled deeply. "Still Brother, you are in the best place," he said, "God's little acre, I call it."

Brother Joseph covered his slightly throbbing hand with the other and held it tightly. He would not like Brother Superior to know he had been stung, having averred for years that bees never really stung anybody who treated them gently and kindly.

"You must be a happy man, Brother, an exceedingly happy man," Brother Superior was saying stretching himself up and down on his toes.

"I am indeed, thanks be to God," Brother Joseph said, adding "Why wouldn't I be?"

"True, true indeed, Brother, why shouldn't you be. Well, it is getting near our dinner hour, time we were going," Brother Superior said looking at his watch. "Of course, Brother, I did not come down to remind you of our meal time I just wanted to tell you that we are expecting his Lordship the Bishop this afternoon."

"The Bishop?"

"Yes, you know he is confirming the boys tomorrow morning so he will be staying with us to-night. Perhaps you would get some flowers for Brother Aloysius to decorate the chapel."

Brother Joseph nodded his head and walked along slowly beside the tall Brother Superior.

After dinner Brother Joseph felt much better. He pothered round the garden, gathered some flowers and then as the sun was not quite so warm as it had been he padded down to his bees. The shadows of the tall trees lay crookedwise over the hives. The busy hum of the morning air was more subdued, and the bees flew in and out of the hives in slow steady little streams.

Slowly and carefully, just a little afraid, Brother Joseph uncovered the hive he had hastily covered when he was stung. The bees came up slowly from between the frames but they took no notice of him. Whilst he waited a moment or two before proceeding with his inspection of the bees, his eye wandered to the hand resting lightly on the edge of the hive; he noticed that the back of his hand had swollen considerably, puffed up like a little balloon, so that the tightly-drawn flesh was very smooth and shiny.

Brother Joseph lifted a frame of bees from the hive and held it in front of his face. He stared intently for a moment as he saw a little cluster of agitated bees in the centre of the frame, then quick as lightning he saw the thin tapering body of the queen darting into the darkness of the cluster. He was so intent watching the queen that he did not hear the approaching footsteps and it was only when the voices sounded close beside him that he realised he was being watched.

He turned his head slightly still holding the frame. Brother Superior nodded and the pink-cheeked Bishop smiled. Brother Superior was speaking.

"Brother Joseph is our apiarist, your Grace, he keeps the community well supplied with the most luscious honey; in fact I think he has spoiled us all."

"How interesting, how very interesting," His Lordship said, beaming.

"Brother Joseph just lives for his bees, your Grace," Brother Superior rambled on enthusiastically. "I really think they love him just as much as he loves them."

Brother Joseph could feel a warm glow suffusing his cheeks and out of the corner of his eye he could see all the other brothers standing back a little behind the Bishop and Brother Superior, like an admiring throng. The Bishop and Brother Superior were standing beside Brother Joseph who still held the frame of bees before his face.

"Carry on, Brother, don't let me disturb you," the bishop said.

Brother Joseph wavered for a moment, he wanted very badly to call the Bishop's attention to the fact that the frame of bees he held in his hand contained the queen.

"Certainly Brother Joseph can handle bees," the bishop said.

Brother Superior blushinglly nodded his head. "Bees are second nature to him, your Grace, look how they crawl about his hands."

The Bishop leaned forward as some of the bees left the top of the frame and crawled over Brother Joseph's thumbs.

Brother Joseph stooped slightly as he placed the frame in position to lower it into its place. Then something happened; his finger grew suddenly dead and lifeless and the frame dropped into place with a thud. A shower of bees rose angrily from the disturbed hive and scattered in all directions.

Brother Joseph heard a painful *Oh!* come from the bishop, then the worried voice of Brother Superior. "Come! Come, your Grace!" He could hear the excited voices of the other Brothers, then a rush and scurry about him, and the crunch of the gravel on the footpath. He stood quite still. A few bees still buzzed noisily about him, but he did not move.

"Brother Joseph! Brother Joseph!" he could hear a voice calling from some distance. "Brother Joseph, come out of that before you are badly stung," the voice cried agitatedly.

Brother Joseph felt quite sick. Very slowly and carefully he edged the fallen frame into its place and then he covered over the hive as though nothing had happened.

He turned away and as he walked slowly along the gravelled path he felt as though all life had been drained from him; his legs were weak and useless, almost unable to support him, and there was a sickening palpitation in his chest. He walked along, unevenly, like a man in a daze. A young Brother was waiting for him at the top of the garden path.

"Are you all right, Brother Joseph?" he asked nervously. "Were . . . were you stung?"

"No." Brother Joseph shook his head. "No, I'm all right, quite all right."

"Thank God for that," the young brother muttered piously "The Bishop—O dear he will be a sorry sight tomorrow. I do hope he will be able to confirm the boys."

"The Bishop," Brother Joseph muttered brokenly and he sighed deeply.

"Give me your arm, Brother," he said. "I am a little tired."

He leaned heavily on the young Brother's arm and walked along silently beside him.

DIALOGUE ABOUT LOVE, POETRY AND GOVERNMENT SERVICE

By Alexander Blok

Translated from the Russian by Blanaid Salkeld.

Persons of the Dialogue :

A LOVE-SICK POET.

A JESTER: (a man of common-sense, occupation unknown).

A COURTIER.

BEGGARS.

Scene :

A LEVEL SPACE, BY THE SEA.

The Jester is sitting over the water, with a fishing-rod.

The Poet approaches him, in a reverie.

POET: I have never noticed you catching a fish in these waters. To all appearances, you are not much of a fisherman?

JESTER: To your Hamlet-like question I can reply: Yes, sir. A day like this is especially favourable for killing: the sea is rough; the dust is in a cloud; the blinded prey flings itself upon the hook.

POET: And, what now might be a good catch?

JESTER: It depends. Quite recently I succeeded in hooking a huge fish. I am certain that it is pleased with me.

POET: The fish is pleased with you?

JESTER : There is nothing really wonderful in that. For a long while, I was teaching it common sense and political economy. But there are times, somehow, when all the fish go mad : they get so fiery, that they will not on any account snap at the hook.

POET : I don't understand a word you are saying. You talk of fish just as if they were people.

JESTER : O, yes, sir. Fool and simpleton though I be, I still have my own allegory : as it has been said in the Scriptures, I am a fisher of men.

POET : Truly, it is a joy to converse with you. And what do you do with your fish ?

JESTER : I set them at liberty, properly trained. Never more do they grieve, or complain, or be worried over trifles. They are content with their lot, and fit for work.

POET : Your words breathe burning conviction. O, if only I had your science. But I'm afraid you are being distracted ; the sea is vast, and the fish are so many, that the number you could instruct would seem negligible.

JESTER : O, no. I have the greatest confidence in them. My science is infectious, it is a gay science.

POET (*aside*) : The fellow has read Nietzsche !

JESTER : One fish teaches another. And, at the right moment, I am ready—in my light little boat of common sense.

POET : Your joie de vivre gives me food for thought.

JESTER (*rapturously*) : O, yes, I am an optimist. I will make so bold as to tell you, further, with my hand on my heart—that I am an idealist. I am a patriot. I am interested in the building up of culture. Everyone who follows me enjoys equality, efficiency and health, for upon my banner is inscribed : Common-sense. Also, I alone—am progress.

POET : Will you not give me the benefit of your experience ?

JESTER : Gladly, sir. I will make a cast, with pleasure, in order to talk with you.

POET : But, who *are* you ? Before I can confide in you, I must know you better.

JESTER : While suppressing, through modesty, the fact that I am the most indispensable man in the town, I can put it allegorically : I am the most sagacious of all the persons participating in this discourse. If you keep dragging

out the conversation with idle vacillations—the wrath of the pupils will fall on *me*. You—are primarily a lover, who always emerges dry out of the water, whereas I am simply a sponger, and I rise in price, in my own time, and on my back.

POET (*with hesitation*): This man speaks simply. His crude natural wisdom lies lightly upon my sorrowful spirit.

JESTER: Make up your mind now, as quickly as possible, sir. I find it boring, reading your thoughts.

POET: You are right, friend; your words glow with health. But why do you talk of pupils?

JESTER: Sir, I am simply trying to say that it is time to have done with superfluous talk, and to proceed to action. But I note by a certain sign that the author of our discourse himself, is a great muddler. Without me, the scene couldn't go on—common-sense always comes to the rescue of the author's imagination.

POET: I understand nothing definitely. But I know that the roots of natural wisdom are dark and full of knots. You inspire me with confidence. Be the attorney of my soul! Do you know who I am?

JESTER: I know very well who you are. You are a poet, sorrowful, and surrounded by banalities. You pour out your complaints in stanzas, which, though excellent, are not understood—because your soul belongs to another generation.

POET: That is true, I swear!

JESTER: Besides that, you are still a handsome young man, passionately in love with a no less handsome lady.

POET: Not a word more! You are a searcher of hearts! Tell me, above all, how I should behave with the lovely lady?

JESTER: I would advise you, in the first place, to dedicate one of your poems to her. Or, better still, a whole volume.

POET: O, I've done that long ago!

JESTER: In that case, you might walk with her for hours by the sea, hinting that your love is even as vast as the sea itself.

POET (*half unconsciously*): In *one*—love, vast, like the sea, that the shores of the world cannot contain.

JESTER : Or, in the last resort, jostle people off the path, in front of her, even at the risk of laying yourself open to the charge of not knowing how to conduct yourself in the street.

POET : My dear fellow, I've tried all those tricks.

JESTER : And, in spite of all, your lady remains inexorable ?

POET : Yes, unfortunately. She looks at me as though she didn't see me. Her gaze is fixed upon the distance.

JESTER : Judging by what you say, sir, your lady is very eccentric. Does she not suffer from an inclination towards liberalism ?

POET : I am convinced that she is above all current formulas. But, her path is free—isn't that what you were wishing to say ?

JESTER : Pardon me for expressing myself discourteously : serving ones neighbour compels one to be rude in speech, however soft the heart may be. So then, my final counsel to you is—write political poems !

POET : You are right. I shall write political poems ! Satires !

JESTER : But, only once, only once, sir ! I do not advise you in general to become addicted to satirical literature. That is not your province. You are a pure artist. Your misty images always make their entrance with ten keen appraisers. It cannot be possible that you should find it more agreeable to work upon the lowest instincts of the mob, when it is in your power to refresh the hearts of the *élite* ?

POET : Out of the spirit of your wisdom, I am drawing this profound thought : literature must be social ! It is no use reproaching the masses for having so little regard for subtle and refined poetry. The mob is sensitive, in its own way, and knows what it requires ! Literature must be as the bread of life !

JESTER : You are putting an altogether wrong construction on my words. You are vainly striving to draw deep truth out of the soul—instead of out of its sheaths. Contempt for the mob—that is the distinguishing mark of a great mind. The mob is not sensitive, but only mad after what is pleasant ; therefore, social literature would be harmful to it. Literature would be harmful to it. Literature develops the imagination ? Imagination—is mother

of the Abyss. Idle and senseless heads are injurious to the well-being of a people, as our hero Gorki has so often told us. Yes, literature is decidedly harmful. And I am taking part in this conversation, merely so that it may the more quickly come to an end.

POET : What a penetrating mind ! Yes, you are a symbolist. I myself am no worshipper of Gorki.

JESTER : What does a ' man of words ' count ? You have been so enchanted by my conversation, that, it seems, you have quite forgotten about the lady. And meanwhile, my real aim is—to co-operate with you, that you may obtain her hand in the quickest possible way.

POET : But I have not been quite seeking her hand. I love her with a love not of *here*.

JESTER : O, sir, how often have we lost a thing through carelessness ? Well, I give you advice only about actual deeds—when action concerns marriage, protection, the pushing through of a business deal

POET : I forgive your brusqueness ; it is permeated with the depth and wisdom of your words. Do what you like, only deliver me from melancholy !

JESTER : You have no reason to be melancholy ; you should instead find yourself some work to do. But, above all do not speak so slowly and pensively : better keep silent for a while. I notice that beggars are gathering round us. They will soon be driven away, I imagine, and we shall enjoy the noble spectacle of order being restored.

(A Courtier appears ; he is out for a walk. Beggars crowd round him. Seeing that he cannot escape, he turns to them with a speech).

COURTIER : Sirs, I am prepared to impart useful information to you. Standing on guard, as we do, over the interests of the district, we, courtiers, listen attentively to the voice of the people. I pray you to formulate your thoughts as briefly and precisely as possible.

BEGGAR : I am hungry.

COURTIER : H'm. That is brief, but not precise.

JESTER : Will your Serene Highness kindly mark the want of development of this man. He will express himself crudely, since culture has not touched him.

COURTIER : The united forces of the Government are directed towards enlightenment. Still, do not be uneasy—in your time, even more offensive things will have to be listened to. May I know with whom I have to do ?

JESTER : At the moment, I am—the servant of your Serene Highness, and a tribune of the people.

COURTIER : More than pleased to hear it. I have always been waiting for people to appear, who will clear up the misunderstanding that exists between the people and the Government. In my opinion, for this, it is only necessary to be in possession of common sense.

JESTER : All my life, I serve common sense, and I avoid whatever might cause friction, and thus prevent true intimacy between individuals and the social forces.

COURTIER : In that case, in order to test you, I will ask you to make the sort of communication to the people that the present circumstance demands.

JESTER (*turning to the Beggars*) : Sirs, your petitions are, I trust, legitimate. The requirements of this man in particular, will be looked into, in the near future. The Government, without doubt, is no less anxious that the people should all be fed. But, as interested people yourselves, you can reflect, that for this, time is necessary. At the present moment, the Government is busy with urgent matters.

(The Beggars are unable to reply. The Courtier feelingly presses the Jester's hand. The Poet draws the Jester aside.)

POET : Does common sense really compel you to behave in this way ?

JESTER : Yes, we are acting absolutely in accordance with its dictates.

POET : Surely you must feed these beggars ?

JESTER : Your brusqueness astonishes me. Do you not see that we are doing all that is in our power ?

POET : You are putting off doing anything at all.

JESTER : You do not yet fully understand the essentials of action. How old-fashioned you are ! Common sense is good, just when it accords with the demands of political economy.

POET : No science compels people to starve !

JESTER : Except this cunning science. I venture to reproach you for your ignorance about the conditions of action : if you feed one beggar, ten more will turn up. If you give

in to one, you jeopardise the position of others. This fact—is above all private impulses.

POET : That is abominable, and it isn't common sense !

COURTIER (*turning to the Beggars, makes a speech*) : I warrant, sirs, that you will all get satisfaction, some way or another. The watchword of the Government of a free country is—the principle of strong legislation. This principle is already in itself bearing fruit. (*His voice gets poignant*). Out of it, as out of the grain of corn, springs a luxuriant harvest. It is essential for contemporary government to serve no longer the dark will of administrators, but to foster creative labour, and a human bond between its subjects and the Government.

POET (*to the Jester*) : I marvel at the persistence of this windbag.

JESTER : I swear to you, no one is in the least surprised. The dialogue between beggars and courtiers is repeated a hundred times. The author of the dialogue in which I am involved, follows apparently the beaten track. It is to his advantage to put every courtier in a foolish light.

POET : You are speaking again in symbols. Is it really possible to forget that poor men and rich men exist ?

JESTER : Allow me to observe, that to talk banalities and to sentimentalize does not befit a poet.

POET : I understand. You are teaching me natural wisdom. But what if I have not the strength to endure the eternal tragedy ? What if I dash out my own brains against this thing that you call banality and sentimentality ?

JESTER : Your ideas are too advanced. In our twentieth century, they think in the nineteenth. But, just remember that Theodor Michailovich Dostoievski, the singer of the humble and the despised, was, at the same time, a worshipper of autocracy—and you have me.

POET : All the same, I will write satires.

JESTER : Again ! You terrify me. Excuse me, but I will give you no more advice. Go rather to Mr. Courtier and try to get yourself a career.

(*The Poet goes, proudly yet docilely, over to the Courtier, who looks kindly upon the Poet.*)

COURTIER : It seems to me, that you have business with me, young man. To judge by your dress and your manners,

I conclude that you belong to the orderly class, and that you have received a sufficiently refined education to enable you to deal with the somewhat ticklish requirements of business people. Am I mistaken in taking you to be a poet?

POET (*a little pedantically*): Yes, up to this very day, I have written poems, but not in the expectation of their being widely known. Still less did I think to find that you should be acquainted with them.

COURTIER: O, yes, I know your poems very well, young man. In me you will find one who truly appreciates subjective lyricism. If I am not mistaken, you have established, in your mystical verses, more than Petrarch ever did, the cult of Woman, and the love of Woman.

POET: Not quite that. But, after all . . .

COURTIER: O, forgive me, if I have not fully understood you. The perpetual cares of Government office, if you like, make a man less sensitive to beauty. Too much irresolution and sympathy are not permissible to a busy man.

POET: Your last words I find very important. It has been accorded to me, at your express desire, to sacrifice my imagination for the common good.

COURTIER: O, Youth, how I love thee! You are all—extremes! At your age, I was just such a hot-head, young man! I may tell you frankly, I, too, wrote verse then . . .

POET: O, really?

COURTIER (*breaking off sternly*): But it seemed to me, that the poetical imagination would be a hindrance in my profession. And now, I have forever given myself up to seeking the welfare of others, and having lost my personal life (you see how they pursue me; they give me no peace)—at times, I regret having given up writing verse. Maybe a poet was lost in me. (*He blows his nose*). So, I hasten to remove every obstacle in your way—for, to bury one's talent, is a sin.

POET: I agree with you.

COURTIER: Subjective lyricism—is a great thing, young man. It gives to the elect hours of aesthetic repose, and permits him, if only for a moment, to forget the voice of the capricious mob. O, I could almost wish that all

literature were just like your poems ! Such poetry does not corrupt the righteous. The profane man is, well, inaccessible to anything but primitive, unbridled desires : such as, to have a roof over his head—you must have been convinced of this yourself, just now. On the other hand, the elect, wiping a moist brow, may put his lips to the inviolate rim of the sacred chalice. (*He is extremely pleased with his own speech*).

POET : I am extremely flattered by your regard for the Muses. Your words have inspired me. Meeting so versatile a man as you are, I cannot but wish to fulfil your commands. I consider it my duty to answer you frankly and openly : prolonged service to the Muses begets melancholy. Abysses gape at my feet. Twofold apparitions afflict me. I desire, with steadfast will, all desirable things ; but I am not fit for life. As to women, I am both attracted and repelled—by their tenderness and their falseness. I seek a man, who will fling living seeds into my torment. I keep ready for the sowing—my soul.

COURTIER : I am touched to the heart by your recognition. Especially what you said about women—that is so penetrating, so profound. O, how well I know the truth of that ! To love one, but not to be able to prefer her to another . . . (*He remembers something with a smile*).

POET : I wasn't saying that, exactly ; I did not want to speak of two, but of one.

COURTIER : In that case, it was still more acute and subtle, young man. Such eloquence as yours, is a rare quality nowadays.

(*The Poet grows sad.*)

COURTIER : There are so few useful and efficient people nowadays, that, without joking, I have designs upon you. Have you not some special request to make to me ?

POET : I sometimes think that I might be delivered from melancholy, in government service.

COURTIER : That is all that I wanted to hear from you, young man. I have nothing to say to you against it. We are fully in accord with your sympathies and tastes. I hope you will not refuse to fall in with my proposal. Your phrases about duality created in my mind a glittering

combination. We shall prepare you for a diplomatic career.

(The Jester congratulates the Poet, who is still sad.)

COURTIER *(to the Jester)*: You, also, have rendered me an inestimable service. I have found a commission for you, too. *(He points furtively to the Beggars, who are standing a little way off The Jester gives a sign that he has understood.)*

COURTIER *(turning to the Beggars)*: Sirs, we have considered your petitions. I am happy to tell you, that to-day the people need have no fear that their confidence in the Government was mistaken. They will shortly enter into communication with you. I have found two servants for the Government. This clearly proves, that the forces of the people are not exhausted. And, similarly, our care for you is not exhausted. *(Exit Courtier, swiftly.)*

JESTER *(to Poet)*: So, my judicious interference has borne you profit. Aye, long live native poetry and government service! And, above all, long live the reconciler of both—Common-sense! *(He runs after the vanishing Poet. A desperate tumult is heard, going on for some time, off stage. The Jester runs back, dishevelled.)*

JESTER: What a poetical temperament! He caught me by a tuft of my hair, and went on screaming, that he doesn't want to be a diplomat! It was useless my trying to take an interest in his future. Behold how I strove for Truth—and give ear to my lofty moral: no one, never, nowhere *(Without a word, he rushes to get his fishing-rod, as new victims of Common sense are seen to approach.)*

DESCARTES AND THE MALIGNANT DEMON

By Arland Ussher

WILLIAM BLAKE said that Milton, "being a true artist, was of the Devil's party in reality," and—as most readers of *Paradise Lost* have felt—the true hero of that epic is Lucifer. It might perhaps with almost equal truth be said that the "hero" of René Descartes' cosmology was, not the God of

the questionable "Ontological Proof," but the famous *Mauvais Génie*; for with Descartes there came to birth that modern, equivocal, religious feeling which pictures the Creative Power more naturally as an elemental "Genius"—Time-Spirit or Life-Force—than as a Lawgiver, as (so to say) magical *Deed* than as a rational and moral *Word*. It is this that makes Descartes for us a more contemporary figure than the saintly and wise Spinoza; we have, we think, evolved past the stage of the Worm in the Blood. Descartes, it will be remembered, posed the problem whether the visible universe was a deceit practised on him by a Malignant Demon; and if it be true that philosophers are interesting to us to-day by the questions they raise rather than by the answers they give to them, then it is Descartes (the true ancestor of the French "Existentialists")—and not Spinoza—who is the Modern. For the Malignant Demon has continued to baffle, haunt and fascinate us throughout three centuries; and Descartes' question—out of which has grown the whole formidable "epistemological" discussion—still awaits an answer. His own comforting conclusion that "God would not deceive us" was, of course, on his premisses, an unwarranted one—as indeed any conclusion at all would have been. The Cartesian Deity was not the God of Aquinas who wills what is good, but, like the God of Calvin, one whose ways are good and whose laws (including the laws of thought) are true simply because he wills them; and such a God is really a daemon or demiurge—he can command our worship but hardly deserve our trust. The daemonic Power who is before and above Reason is in fact not far removed from the purely malign and demonish one who grants us Reason only to mock us; whose omnipotence shows itself best in complete irrationality—whose pleasure is the primordial-artist's fascination for the Lie. This fear is very old; in an impersonal form it still hangs over the East; it is hinted in the Dark God of D. H. Lawrence and some of the Germans—the Spirit who, after two thousand years of the ascendancy of Logic and the Logos, first stirs again under the classic surface of the prose of Descartes. And as the era of Aristotle petered out in the disputes of realist and nominalist concerning the *Word*, so the age of Descartes has terminated with the no less barren debates of "realist" and idealist concerning the *Fact*: a thesis and antithesis to which the synthesis has not been so much as glimpsed by any living philosopher—surprisingly, not even by the esthetician Croce,

though it is implicit in some of the *boutades* of Wilde. The new problem, indeed, like the old, is a religious one, and (I suggest) its answer will be the religious faith of the next great Era in history; it is, in a different version, the eternal problem of the Mediator. Man, "a stranger and afraid" in a strange world, seeks first a promise that his soul is not damned, secondly an assurance that his mind is not deceived—firstly an earnest of the existence of a better world, afterwards a proof of the reality of this one. And as Reason gave him the first in the life and works of Jesus Christ, so Imagination (in Blake's sense) must give him the second by the revelation of the Holy Spirit in Art—Art which alone can restore Significance, and therefore Reality, to a world which Reason has ended by denuding of both. But what is this? Was it not said that Milton and Descartes, *being artists*, were "of the Devil's party in reality"? Is the Demon after all Heaven's Messenger in disguise, is "Satan" the Greek Sôtēr? It would seem so, for Evil—as Aquinas saw—has no positive entity, but is all Appearance; the contrary being the pre-supposition of melodrama. And here we have an explanation of the daemonic age in which we live; for only pure individual perception can save us from the contradictions of Reason, and the earliest species of Artist is the Magician—the primitive form of the Autonomous Individual is always the Anarch; man's home-coming to the Super-rational must cross the Circean seas of the Irrational. The lying and evil "ideologies" of to-day are crooked foreshadowings of the coming Artist-Man's philosophy; they are the first unfledged attempts to gain the aerial "bird's-eye" view, and see the configuration of the Forest for the Facts—the facts which have become all alike as one fir-tree is like another, and (consequently) all unreal. They are attempts, in the Existentialists' terminology, to create Essence out of the *Néant* of an atomised and dehydrated Existence. For the disease of modern man is the loss of the sense of reality; and *therefore* also of common humanity. His malady is not principally, as simple people think, any mere pagan or brutish selfishness; he is, more than any man before him, compact of social impulses eager to expend themselves. But his intellect has sunk deep clefts between the subject and object of consciousness—has dropped, as it were, "iron curtains" around the Ego. And the result is a solitude from which he vainly tries to escape by murderous action; but the more he is violent the less he is passionate—his

murderings are an almost conscious suicide. The Castle of Axel has become the Castle of Kafka ; the cerebral Cosmos is without windows, and the hapless tenant is by turns locked into it and locked out. Seeing then that the human being of to-day is not so much morally as mentally sick—less a sot than a solipsist—it is clear that no moral preachments or exhortations to “love” can be of avail—rather they will be twisted to justify his ignoble conformism with the majority. Even the mystical panaceas of certain intellectual groups we regard as mistaken ; for the “mystic,” who in simpler times was a protester against earthy or conventionalised cults, to-day merely brings the support of his great tradition to the typical modern heresies of solipsism, idealism and monism. It should be remarked that Germany, the land of the extremest obedience to the State, is also the land *par excellence* of metaphysical introspection and introversion ; the complementary halves of the German (and, in general, the modern) psyche are the Yogi and the Commissar, and the super-normal powers often claimed by the former would infallibly be turned to the profit of the latter. The illusoriness of the material universe to-day needs no stressing—Lord Buddha has conquered and the world has grown grey with his disenchantment ; what yet has to be learnt is the *significance* of the great Dream—the depth fully expressed, like a picture’s, in the surface. “*To the man of imagination,*” said Blake, “Nature is itself imagination.” To the Latin rationalist this means that Nature is a lie ; to the Teutonic idealist it means that Being is Not-Being. The whisper in the North European gloom that haunted Descartes and bedevilled Hegel will be silenced by no grandiloquent theosophies, but rather by the still and small voices of the artist’s Minute Particulars, the “pure Phenomenon” of Goethe, the Part which is “greater than the Whole” ; then we shall be able to say (to paraphrase the words of the last great revelation of Meaning), “O *Maya* where is thy sting ? Where Illusion thy victory ?” Perhaps that is the promise of the democratic idea and of its continent—the sunken new-found Continent of the Subconscious, in the seas where the Dragon of the abstract arrogant Sun is drowned.

CHILDHOOD

By Brenda Chamberlain

THE joy of childhood : the terror of it. Because she was born on Christmas Day they named her Mary Josephine. Beware the feast of St. Joseph, the nineteenth of March. It was to the iron ship they took her on that day, when she was a child.

It was soon after they had moved into the house in Great Arnold Street. Her da kept a livery stable in the next road. There everything was black and polished : the tall funeral horses gleamed like the sides of the carriages which they drew. Spears of light glanced from the polished wheels ; the carriages had lines that pleased the soul. On fine summer Sundays the family drove out over the cobbled streets into the country. Grandmother, shapeless in black cloth sewn with sequins, sat in a pile of cushions. She was disgusted whenever one of the horses lifted its tail to let out a greased roll of dung. Her mouth fell at the corners, her eyes filled with frost.

Every time this happened : the same ritual.

"Whoa, beauties," said her son. "Sian, out with the box and spade, my boy." Sian, grumbling to be in Sunday clothes (his trousers were hot and scratched his legs) hopped down and went back for the manure. After he had scraped it up, there was a wet green stain left on the road. Grandmother drew away her skirts as the boy pushed the box under the seat.

Grandmother and Mary Josephine sat opposite Mother and Sian. The Father drove, cracking a ribboned whip. Elder brother Liam never went with them. He led a secret life on Sundays, furtively oiling his reddish hair, stealing a handkerchief from his Mother's store for the pocket of his best jacket, and going out of the house with pathetic defiance.

One Sunday they passed Liam as the carriage drew them out of the town. A door into her brother's life was opened to the child. He was standing on a street corner with two flash girls, dressed to kill. They giggled and nudged Liam, who, his sister could see, would willingly have died under the paving stones.

"There's your first-born, Mrs. O'Donovan," said the Father.

"Tch, tch, look the other way," said his wife.

"That son of yours," said the Grandmother, "there's bad blood somewhere." And she looked hard at her daughter-in-law.

To Mary Josephine he didn't seem like her brother when he was away from them in the street, with friends she didn't know. Should she smile and wave to him, or look straight ahead as her parents were doing?

"Mary Josephine, don't turn round."

The child stiffened her back in its shop-bought silk and straightened the brim of her Sunday hat. It was a fine sunburnt leghorn straw wreathed with grasses, cornflowers and shining scarlet poppies. It had stiff white daisies with yellow hearts, buttercups, ears of wheat.

Summer. The smell of the black cloth hood folded at the back of the carriage. Flashing wheels, sweating horses. They stopped to rest on the mountain road above a ravine. Milky sweat ran down the horses' flanks over which clouds of flies hovered. Bridles shook. The horses were like blind beasts with their close-fitting patent leather blinkers.

A waterfall roared in the dark ravine below the road. Rowan trees dripped and smoked in the spray of the waterfall.

The child was pleased at the sound her shoe made on the iron step of the landau as she got down to look at the gully.

The intensity of childhood: she sniffed the wild smell of falling water. White bodies with streaming hair threw themselves out to be lost in spray and spinning bubbles.

On the road the honey-heavy trees (the highroad was stained all over with drops of sticky nectar) cast blue shadows over the glossy horses and the funeral carriage with her family sitting there compact, a family group.

The joy of childhood: the waterfall beginning to flow down all her days and nights.

II

The terror of it.

They had moved into the house in Great Arnold Street because her da had wanted to be near his livery stables. They were surrounded by warehouses: her da opened a shop. He said: "We won't have curtains on the front windows, for I'm not ashamed of shop-keeping. The window shall be full of teapots and crocks, full to the top. And who cares whether any of them get sold?"

One day Mary Josephine was sitting in the shop playing Little House by herself and watching the brewers' drays go by

over the cobbled street. Some of these draught horses had to be muzzled ; one of them had a curling beard on his lower lip.

The district smelt of horses and malt and the sea. Straw and chaff blew over the cobbles, along the gutters. There was a pleasant patch of sunlight in the doorway. Shadows suddenly stretched across the pool of brightness. The foreign sailors came into the shop. Foreigners, Frenchmen in uniform, came in out of the sunshine to buy up the place. They bought cups and saucers, teapots, saucepans. One of them pinched the child's cheek, so, saying to her Mother : " When the things are delivered to the ship, you will send the little girl along with them, won't you ? "

She prayed to herself : " Jesus, Mary and Joseph, save me from these foreigners and their black ship."

A few days later the dray was filled with crockery. On the nineteenth of March. Her brother Liam was to deliver the things and she was to go with him. She cried and prayed : " I don't want to go, I don't want to go." She had a thick mass of hair and Liam pulled it, laughing and shouting : " Come on, you hairy-headed faggot, you." So she had to go, for they were all afraid of Liam, even her da and Grandmother. Sitting in the dray as they bumped over the cobblestones down to the quay she prayed without a stop : " Jesus, Mary and Joseph, save me."

They came alongside the ship. The crates were taken up on board. Liam dragged her onto the deck. It was all black, it was iron. An iron vessel of darkness. Mary Josephine cried and begged to be taken home. The captain came and spoke to her saying : " Come and see the tables laid ready for a feast." She cried and wept for home and parents.

At last they let her go down onto the quayside. Through her tears she saw the ship move away into the silence from which it never returned.

DAN HAYES OF LIMERICK

By Robert Herbert

MANY a tourist in Limerick, while wandering through the beautiful old Cathedral of Saint Mary the Virgin, must stop and gaze up in wonder and surmise on the character of the strange genius who had his own epitaph cryptically, and not too modestly inscribed on a stone, high up under the decorated

capital of a square Romanesque pillar : DAN HAYES, AN HONEST MAN AND A LOVER OF HIS COUNTRY. No small claim for a man to make who lived in the eighteenth century when honesty was at a discount ; and in London, where acts of Irish patriotism were, to say the least of it, not encouraged.

For the next step in the identification of this strange genius we must go to the files of the old *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, when an even more startling announcement, in the form of a Kilkenny Theatre playbill, will greet our goggling eyes :—

KILKENNY THEATRE ROYAL.

By his Majesty's company of comedians.

(The last night because the company go to-morrow to Waterford).

On Saturday, May 14, 1793.

Will be performed, by command of several respectable people in this learned metropolis, for the benefit of Mr. Kearns,

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET.

Originally written and composed by the celebrated Dan Hayes of Limerick, and inserted in Shakespeare's Works.

Hamlet by Mr. Kearns (being his first appearance in that character), who, between the acts, will perform several solos on the patent bag-pipes, which play two tunes at the same time.

Ophelia by Mrs. Prior, who will introduce several favourite airs in character, particularly the "Lass of Richmond Hill," and "We'll all be unhappy together," from the Rev. Mr. Dibdin's Oddities.

The parts of the King and Queen, by direction of the Rev. Father O'Callaghan, will be omitted, as too immoral for any stage.

Polonius, the comical politician, by a young gentleman, being his first appearance in public.

The ghost, the Grave-digger and Laertes, by Mr. Sampson, the great London comedian.

The characters to be dressed in Roman shapes.

To which will be added, an interlude, in which will be introduced several sleight-of-hand tricks, by the celebrated Surveyor Hunt.

The whole to conclude with the farce of MAHOMET THE IMPOSTER. Mahomet by Mr. Kearns.

Tickets to be had of Mr. Kearns, at the Sign of the Goat's Beard, in Castle Street.

*** The value of the tickets, as usual, will be taken (if required) in candles, bacon, soap, butter, cheese, &c., as Mr. Kearns wishes, in every particular, to accommodate the public.

N.B.—No person whatever will be admitted into the boxes without shoes or stockings.

The "Celebrated Dan Hayes of Limerick," sometimes known as Count Hayes on account of his lordly manners and lavish ways, was born in the year 1733 in the County of Limerick, on the pleasant banks of the Commogue, nearly opposite the great Desmond stronghold of Glenogra. Descended from an ancient Irish family who had sold their birthright for a mess of pottage, a large and rich estate, Hayes was born of well-to-do parents, and his father, who was himself a lawyer, intended his son to follow the same sober profession. Unfortunately for Dan, the age was one of reckless spending and riotous living; and, losing his father at the tender age of ten, and meeting with too little restraint from an over-indulgent mother, he joined in the crazy extravagance of Assizes time in Limerick, and the even wilder holiday fun of Limerick's great eighteenth century spa and resort, Castleconnell. A poem written when he was just turned eighteen may be taken as truly typical of his own life at this period. As he bids farewell to Limerick, to enter Trinity, chased thence by the magistrates, he leaves us a description of the mad behaviour of the bucks, which for strength and vulgarity can compete with the best and the worst of the 18th century poets:—

Ye gentle virgins, set your hearts at ease,
No more the town's disturbed with riotous Hayes;
No more in barrack street his sword he draws,
Nor murders horses, nor bravades the laws;
No more inspired with 'rack he scours the streets,
To sweat and play the devil with all he meets;
No more the windows clink with clattering stones,
Nor dying pigs emit untimely groans;

The peaceful street, no more with clamour rings,
 Nor nightly fiddlers ply their sounding strings,
 No more with phrase obscene, the drum he fills,
 Nor troubles Tom for bolus, stupes or pills

In that year, 1751, Hayes entered himself a fellow commoner of Trinity, and although I can find no record of his ever having graduated, he is said to have completed his studies here in much less time than is commonly taken for that purpose. Here also he began a poetical translation of part of Cicero's works, and went as far as to publish proposals for it at one guinea a copy; but although he was later offered £500 for the manuscript in London, it never appeared in print, and the only record we have of his interest in Cicero is in a blood-thirsty poem entitled "On the death of Cicero." It attacks the assassin of him whose

" . . . heavenly tongue, that every foe subdued,
 Those angel lips in nectar thrice imbued;
 That reverend visage worn with age and woe,
 Where radiant truth and white robed freedom glow"

It ends:—

" May Demogordon, Hell's blue tortures blow,
 And search her lowest magazines of woe;
 May yawning fiends the haggard wretch receive,
 And flaming seas of boiling sulphur lave;
 O'er his curst shade, may grinning demons prowl,
 And fire-eyed furies sting his cankered soul,
 Whose poisoned dagger aimed the impious blow,
 And murdered the Divinity below."

From Trinity, Hayes went to the Middle Temple in London to study the law, and lodged in the house of Richard Balfe the printer, in the parish of Saint Martin, Ludgate. From here he wrote to a friend in Limerick a typical letter, in answer to a request to intercede with the Prime Minister on behalf of the Independent citizens of Limerick against the corrupt Corporation. It reminds me of the Achill fisherman who asked me to be sure to plead his case with De Valera when I got back to Dublin from my holidays: "Dear Jack. Your letter surprised me not a little, when I found that you had so far succeeded against my old friends the Corporation. But what in the name of wonder could suggest

to you that I had, or could have, any intercourse with, or access to, Lord Bute. He is, believe me, too great a personage for any Irishman in this kingdom to address as you mention; except Lord Shelbourne. I could, perhaps, get a written memorial delivered to him, or inscribe him a book, or get now and then to the foot of his table. But to attempt to influence his voice, and that, too, in the Privy Council. Good God, Jack, what an idea you must have of a Prime Minister!"

Some time after his arrival in London, news was brought to Hayes of the death of his mother. His sensitive nature was badly deranged by the shock, and for a time he lost touch with the decencies of life and became at once, buck, rake, libertine and drunkard. In his poetry, published after his death, he describes his life in London, given over to drunkenness and debauchery, quarrels and duels; but for a description the reader is tactfully referred to the work in question, a collector's piece published in London in 1769 and in Limerick in 1785, *The Works in Verse of Daniel Hayes, Esq., late of the Middle Temple, London*. However he found time to write what he himself describes as "Trifles, the production of an idle morning or a loose afternoon," which he would never have published "but some copies having got abroad, were recopied in so corrupt and spurious a manner that I could scarce know them for mine." The most important of these "trifles," "The Authors," is a really powerful satire against the minor authors who were endeavouring to step into the shoes of his admired Dryden. In it he flays Churchill, Whitehead, Colman, Brown, Foote and Macklin, and bears the palm to Gray, Johnson and that now forgotten author whom Saintsbury has described as "a sort of frozen Keats," Mark Akenside.

Like Charles Johnstone, the author of that famous prose satire, *Chrysal*, Hayes was a moralist who aimed his biggest guns at the members of that infamous club, the Monks of Mednemham, Churchill, Wilkes and Whitehead, and joins with them a corrupt and scheming clergyman whom I have been unable to identify. There were too many corrupt politically-minded scribbling clergy in those days, e.g. Churchill himself, Sterne, Kidgell and Brown.

Churchill stern chief, his boisterous claim exprest
A blood-shot eye, last night's debauch confest
I quitted my first God to follow thee;

Damned leaden bibles and these tramm'ling rules
 That scoundrel bishops would obtrude on fools
 Then for these facts, the town can prove them true,
 Throw me the prize, and give the dev'l his due

He ceased : and now a glutton stept before
 In furbished cassock—no sly mask he wore ;
 For e'en hypocrisy disdain'd to grace
 With her smooth varnish that enormous face ;
 But his blunt features, never formed to think,
 Seemed all intent on feasts, and lust, and drink ;
 While ignorance and impudence combined,
 In equal portions parcelled out his mind ;
 At home, a vaunting, proud, important knave ;
 Abroad, a pandar, parasite and slave ;
 Swayed by no principle but love of pelf,
 And all his wishes centered in himself :
 Ready for hire to prove it orthodox
 That Pitt's a traitor and a patriot Fox ;
 But foiled in hopes of mitre and lawn-sleeves,
 Proclaims that Fox the very worst of thieves,
 Alike disgraceful to the Church and stage,
 The shame and scandal of a vicious age ;
 A tool to rascals and to wits a jest,
 Such (mighty truth !) our parson stood confest

Sore frowned the God : when *Whitehead* (who crept in,
 While Churchill's breech was turned) with simpering grin;
 Perfumed handkerchief and sneaking bow,
 Hem'd thrice, and whispered, you shall hear as how :
 So please my Lord ! I'm perfectly well read.
 In all French books, and was at Cambridge bred ;
 No naughty thoughts pollute my gentle breast,
 Nor have those eyes beheld a nymph undrest ;
 Soft are my strains, soft as the cooling breeze
 That fans the flow'ry vale and verdant trees ;
 In prose, or verse, I'm simple as a child,
 My plays are pointless, and my odes are mild ;
 Wit I excluded as unnatural glee,
 (at least 'tis quite unnatural to me)

All laughed, and now small *Colman* in the list
 Appeared, an actor bore him in his fist ;
 Much did he shake, and seemed abash'd and pos'd,
 Like felon mouse in faithless engine clos'd.—
 This genius from the first amus'd his pen
 With *petit drolles*, and burlesquing great men,
 Assumed a patent for discharging squibs,
 In tiny farces, and quaint play-house fibs ;
 Behind the scenes he always had a fling,
 Tickling she-players with his little sting—. . . .

But who comes here so prim with tuck'd up gown,
 What ? Is it Madden ? No, 'tis Doctor *Brown* :
 Audacious, testy, petulant of tongue,
 Arraigning all, and always in the wrong ;
 Servile as arrogant, more pert than wise,
 Thro' pride a slave, from art to art he flies ;

Next, more a candidate for pence than fame,
 In greasy night-cap worthy *Macklin* came ;
 On his hard jaw sat Shylock's genuine grin,
 Mundungus juices drivelled down his chin :
 His right hand shewed a blotted bundle snatched ;
 From damping wits, the left his *podex* scratched,
 Of polisht words he scorned to make a choice ;
 And with his figure well agreed his voice

Having got rid of the upstarts, Hayes comes to the chosen ones, Gray, Johnson, and Akenside, and when we consider that the Reverend Charles Churchill was one of the most popular poets of his day, and that Paul Whitehead was Poet Laureate, we cannot help admiring Hayes' contemporary judgment which has been most emphatically endorsed by posterity. Of Gray he writes :—

Father of melting sound ! whose magic reeds
 Charmed the mute flocks, and cheered the listening meads ;
 If liveliest nature joined with softest art,
 To warm the soul, or humanize the heart,
 If happiest themes in sweetest numbers drest,
 By me inspired, and by the Graces blest,
 If moral truths, with elegance conveyed

To curb loose pride, and charm while they persuade ;
 If varied notes, whose thrilling airs excel
 The song of Pindar and the Lesbian shell ;
 If these, and what but these can justly claim
 Thy grace ? here, here bestow the crown of fame”

And what more worthy or, indeed, truthful character could have been given than this one, to Samuel Johnson :—

No warbler he, in trivial notes to sing
 Phryne's daub'd cheek to every fiddle string :
 No ribbald he, with vile abuse to drown
 A harmless race, and scandalize a gown ;
 His generous aim fair truth to reconcile,
 And root corruption from the tainted isle ;
 Whilst envy owns thro' every arduous stage
 His life, a brighter lesson than his page ;
 Who then but him deserves the crown of fame ?
 Stand forth, my Johnson ! and assert thy claim : ”

Hayes' own claim to being a lover of his country is, apparently, based on the fact that he himself wrote several pamphlets for the Bute Ministry, and to the fact that any aspersions cast on Ireland usually led to a duel. So whether he meant Ireland or England when he wrote “ his country ” we can never determine. Shortly before his death at the early age of 34, just three years later, and one year older, than Charles Churchill, with whom he had too much in common, Hayes suffered another shock. The death of his beloved mistress was the cause, and this time the shock converted him from his evil ways. A passage from his poem on the Abbe de Rance, “ The Thundering Abbot,” who suffered a like conversion before he founded the Trappists, is said to be mainly autobiographical.

I thought to press my lovely Laura's charms,
 And melt transported in her glowing arms ;
 When, hold me heart, a lonely coffin stood ;
 The floor, the marble stained with recent blood ;
 A feeble taper streamed a twinkling light,
 And barely served to prove the hideous sight ;
 I raised a veil ; the taper just betrayed
 A headless corse ; yet still I knew the maid ;
 Her polished form the unrivalled fair exprest,

And well—too well—I knew her snowy breast.
 A marble vase stood near—I turned around,
 I raised another veil—her head I found ;
 O killing sight ! those once commanding eyes,
 Those lips once tinged with nature's richest dyes,
 That cheek, that boasted spring's delightful bloom,
 That breath, more sweet than summer's rich perfume ;
 That general grace, that struck the wondering sight,
 All, all opprest by long and joyless night

Enough, we may well say, to convert an even greater sinner than either de Rance or Hayes !

In his will, Dan Hayes, with a true philanthropy—for hospitals were hardly known in those days—left his money for the erection of a hospital in Limerick ; failing which it was to go to Trinity to augment the Sizar's Fund there. He also left to James Browne, a Limerick merchant, “ the sum of fifty pounds to buy a ring, which I know he will wear for my sake, as I am glad fortune has put him above the reach of every other testimony than this small manifestation of gratitude.” He had not forgotten his early days in Limerick.

He died in London on the 20th of July, 1767, and his remains were brought back to Limerick and interred, with all due respect, in the south aisle of the Cathedral. His funeral was attended by the expectant Governors of the County Hospital, a sermon was preached by the Dean, and an anthem was sung over his body before interment. But, alas, his relatives successfully contested the will and neither college nor hospital benefitted by it. Poor Hayes's self-vaunted patriotism must rest on his self-composed epitaph : “ An honest man and a lover of his country.”

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

By P. S. O'Hegarty

THE ABBEY THEATRE (WOLFHOUND) SERIES OF PLAYS.

In the Notes on the Bibliography of Synge in this magazine for January—March, 1942, there is a reference to Synge's *Well of the Saints*, which formed Volume I of this series. Looking over the set, it would seem worth while to set down some points in connection with the series.

There were fifteen volumes—viz.:—

- I.—*The Well of the Saints*. Synge. 1905.
- II.—*Kincora*. Lady Gregory. 1905.
- III.—*The Land*. Colum. 1905.

- IV.—*The Hour Glass, Cathleen Ní Houlihán, The Pot of Broth*. Yeats. 1905.
 V.—*The King's Threshold*. Yeats. 1905.
 VI.—*On Baile's Strand*. Yeats. 1905.
 VII.—*The Building Fund*. Boyle. 1905.
 VIII.—*The White Cockade*. Lady Gregory. 1905.
 IX.—*Spreading the News, The Rising of the Moon*. Lady Gregory; and *The Poorhouse*, by Douglas Hyde, translated by Lady Gregory, 1906.
 X.—*The Playboy of the Western World*. Synge. 1907.
 XI.—*When the Dawn is Come*. MacDonagh. 1908.
 XII.—*The Cross Roads*. Robinson. 1909.
 XIII.—*Thomas Muskerry*. Colum. 1910.
 XIV.—*Birihright*. Murray. 1911.
 XV.—*Mixed Marriage*. Ervine. 1911.

Vol. I is made up of the sheets of the text of the *Bullen* edition of the same year, printed at the *Chiswick Press*, with a specially printed *Bullen* and *Abbey Theatre* title page, as detailed in MacManus. There was a second edition of it in the same year, differing from the first in that it was a *Maunsel* title, the text being still the sheets of the *Bullen* edition, that it has four pages of *Maunsel's* advertisements at the end, and that the note on the recto of the back cover announcing the forthcoming publication of *Kincora* has been omitted.

Vol. II. has an *Abbey Theatre* title, text printed in Dublin by Ponsonby & Gibbs, and cover by Hely's, and advertises Vol. I on the recto of the back cover. There was a second edition in the same year with a *Maunsel* title, recto of back cover blank, and an advertisement of the *Series* on verso.

Vol. III has an *Abbey Theatre* title, text printed by Ponsonby & Gibbs, no imprint on cover, Vols. I and II advertised on recto of back cover. There was a second edition in the same year, which has a *Maunsel* title, four pages of *Maunsel's* advertisements at end, and the back cover blank.

Vols. IV to XV have *Maunsel* titles.

Vols. IV, V, and VI are made up of the sheets of the text of the *Bullen* edition of 1904, printed at the *Chiswick Press*, with the titles, and presumably the covers, printed at *Hely's*. Vols. V and VI are continuously paginated.

The remaining volumes are presumed to be all Dublin printed, but Vols. VIII, IX, and XII—XV have no printer's imprint.

There were two issues of Vol. XI. In the first issue it is numbered X, in the second issue the I has been added, by a stamp, apparently.

Vols. III and X to XII have half-titles, the others not.

Vol. I is generally accepted as the first edition of *The Well of the Saints*, and Mr. MacManus so collates it. I am not aware of any conclusive evidence on the point, and I suggest to Mr. MacManus that he should investigate it thoroughly when he is revising his bibliography. It is not easy to see A. H. Bullen agreeing to the publication of the play at 1s. in advance of his own edition, with the preface by W. B. Yeats, at 3s. 6d. On the other hand, the John Quinn copy of this edition had belonged to T. W. Lyster, and had his signature, and the date, *February 15, 1905*, so that it was on sale then. The play was produced on February 4th, 1905, and Mr. Yeats's introduction to the *Bullen* edition is dated 27th January, 1905, and the edition might conceivably have been rushed out before February 15th—it was presumably waiting for the introduction.

P. S. O'HEGARTY.

A GOTHIC BIBLIOGRAPHY. By Montague Summers. The Fortune Press. £2 10s.

What really is a Gothic novel? The question must arise in the mind of every reader of this book, because Mr. Summers does not define it in any definite manner. On the other hand his bibliographical hand list includes sensational and melodramatic fiction of all sorts, and in his preface he refers the reader to the full available bibliographies of Scott, Lytton, and G. P. R. James. He includes our old friends *Jack Harkaway*, *Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere*, *Tom Wildrake*, and all the heroes of *The Boys of England* and its companion journals of the 'sixties to the 'nineties, are writ down as Gothic. Mr. Summers, in fact, regards the Gothic novel as having an existence of over 200 years, including in this field the whole nineteenth century's output of sensational fiction, and seeing the influence of the *Genre* everywhere.

I think the field is too large and the claim unjustified. To me, at any rate, the Gothic novel would be those novels which were inspired by *The Castle of Otranto*, *The Monk*, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and Jane Austen's *Horrid Mysteries*. They had a tremendous vogue while they lasted, but how long did they last, in any real sense, after Scott, and Dickens, and Thackeray had got into their stride? The Gothic novel, it seems to me, is essentially a novel of terror, of castle spectres, clanking of chains, dungeons under the moat, 200% villains, and so on, ruins and storms and forests, and distinguished by the fact that all these things, the machinery of the novels, are the important things in them. Much too large a claim is made for the influence which this *Genre* is said to have exercised upon later fiction, and for the life of me I cannot see how schoolboys' stories of school life, and of adventure, can be called Gothic. You might just as well call *W. H. G. Kingston* and *G. A. Henty* Gothic. I doubt even the propriety of including *Pierce Egan*, *J. F. Smith* and *Reynolds*. Some of Reynolds's do undoubtedly depend upon terror, but his masterpiece, *The Mysteries of London* and *The Mysteries of the Court*, is a series of dramatic and sensational novels, but not Gothic.

Taken as a bibliographical hand list of sensational fiction the book is invaluable. It is a large book of 620 pages, with both an author's index and a title index, which is a pity. It should have been not beyond doing to give the one list, the author's one, and to supplement it with a title index of those books of which the authors are not known. The reference to the *E. J. Brett's Harkaway*, etc., publications is an imperfect one, which is a pity, seeing that the Barry Ono collection, now in the British Museum, should facilitate a full list. In this connection Mr. Summers gives credit for the *Jack Harkaway* stories to *Bracebridge Hemming*, but it seems fair to point out that very early in the course of their serial publications Mr. Brett published a statement that he himself invented the characters and the incidents and employed "other gentlemen" to write them up. He repeated this several times and it does not appear ever to have been challenged.

There are quite a number of titles of novels by writers with Irish names, or about Irish life, not noted in Brown, which call for investigation. But Mr. Summers attributes James McHenry's well known *O'Halloran*, or *The Insurgent Chief*, to the Rev. *Thomas Berkeley Greaves*.

P. S. O'H.

DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Leventhal

MUNGO'S MANSION. By Walter Macken. Macmillan & Co. Ltd. 5/- net.
THE FIRSTBORN. By Christopher Fry. Cambridge University Press. 6/- net.
THE FIFTH GOSPEL. By H. F. Rubenstein. Victor Gollancz Ltd. 3/6 net.
THE SHEPHERD AND THE HUNTER. By David Martin. Allan Wingate Ltd. 6/- net.

Sean O'Casey has been the most flattered of the Abbey Theatre dramatists and looks likely to be the most imitated. It is not meant that his own later imitations of, or rather inspiration by, Toller and the Expressionists are to be the wells into which the younger Irish playwrights will lower their hopeful buckets for dramatic truth, but his original slum creations, his Junos and Joxers and his see-saw of tragedy and farce. Walter Macken is the latest recruit to the *école* O'Casey, shifting the scene from Dublin to Galway with a consequent switch from the Coombe accent to a less adenoidal Connaught one. This the author attempts to indicate by phonetic spelling—a difficult enough task when the reader is already familiar with a dialect but almost impossible otherwise.

The plot is ordinary enough and hinges on a sweep-ticket turning into £2,000 for the benefit of, believe it or not, Mungo King incapacitated and jobless head of a slum household. His friend Mowleogs brings off this miracle by spending on a ticket the money entrusted to him by Mungo for the purpose of backing a horse called Muckaunahitheradawhulia (you can hear the groundlings rocking the Abbey rafters with their laughter). Mungo has earlier insisted that he will not leave the tenement where he lives in squalor with a wife and eleven children: "I'll lave it in my coffin and not before . . . I'd prefer to be livin' here than law-dee-dawing out in the Crescent with the Doctors." At the end of the play, after his child has been carried off to hospital in the same ambulance as the battered corpse of a neighbour murdered by a mad husband, he relents and agrees to move to the more salubrious surroundings provided by a new Corporation house.

Mr. Macken sets out to entertain and in this comedy demonstrates an ability to create types. Mowleogs, whose clothes are held together by safety-pins, out-Joxers the prototype. Hear him speak in a conflation of Synge and O'Casey imagery:

"Mungo me oul' pal Mungo! The man that never turned a back on a friend in his life! Mungo, the man a the moment! Mungo, the brightest jool in the diadalorum of the Thirteen Tribes . . . May the angels fly over 'm with bint wings and the little childer a the streets come teh kiss his hand."

Passages like this are few but opportunities for foolacting are many and the Abbey Theatre, where the play was produced in February 1946, was filled for many weeks by playgoers looking for a good laugh. As I write, *Mungo's Mansion* is running in London.

It certainly cannot be said that there is a dearth of poetic drama in our generation, nor can it be said that, as was the case with Browning and Tennyson for example, the modern poetic play is unsuited for the stage. Wyndham Lewis pleaded some while ago for a partnership between architect and engineer for the creation of buildings at once beautiful and functional and the dramatist of to-day,

using poetry as his medium, has felt the obvious need of combining a knowledge of the mechanics of the stage with dexterity in manipulating the might and music of his line.

The action of *The Firstborn* takes place in 1200 B.C. in the Egypt of the Bible under the shadow of the pyramids with a God-inspired Moses as hero. Despite Christopher Fry's foresight in economising the scenery (only two sets are required; Pharaoh's palace and Miriam's tent) he has not sufficiently taken into account the inability of the average audience to listen for long to concentrated verse dialogue, however impressive, that does not soon mount into action. To hold the attention too much is left to the skill of the actor and his power of interpreting lines unfamiliar to the listeners. It must be said, nevertheless, that the reading of the script gives a vivid sense of the elemental forces behind the character of Moses. This awareness does not depend solely on acquaintance with the Bible story but rises out of the poetry of the drama that unfolds itself into the inevitable triumph of Israel. Yet in the knowledge that Pharaoh, like Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, hasn't a chance against "the infinite eaves-dropper" our sympathy goes out to him and above all, in this play, to his son Ramases whom Moses tries in vain to save when the ultimate plague descends on the unfortunate Egyptian firstborn.

Mr. Fry has risen to the nobility of his theme. To atmosphere he can add awe as he imagines the havoc wrought by the plagues:

I looked out, and when I looked to the north I saw
Instead of quiet cattle, glutted jackals,
Not trees and pasture but vulture-bearing boughs
And fields which had been sown with hail. And looking
To the south I saw, like falling ashes after fire,
Death after thirst, death after hunger, death
After disease. And when I looked to the east
I saw an old woman ridding herself of lice;
And to the west, a man who had no meaning
Pushing thigh-deep through drifts of locusts.

The last two lines suggest one of those surrealist pictures of desolation that Chirico could paint so evocatively.

One should like to see *The Firstborn* on the stage in spite of suspected *longueurs* and if it were adapted to broadcasting, the Third Programme could use it with profit.

The Fifth Gospel is more of a tract than a play. Mr. Rubenstein uses all his skill as a dramatist (and he has given much evidence of it in the past) to pray for an understanding between church and synagogue. We have moved from a minatory Moses anxious to lead his people into the desert away from contact with the gentile tyrant to a period some hundred and thirty years after Christ when we meet the gentle Jude, head of the Church of Jerusalem, endeavouring to build upon what remains of the spiritual heritage common to Christians and Jews. *The Firstborn* occasionally evokes a modern parallel, for it is difficult to dissociate the Jew of to-day from the ancient Israelite; in *The Fifth Gospel* the identification with our own time is more urgent and is obviously ever present in the author's mind.

We are introduced to a family of Nazarenes, Hebrew-Christians believing at once in the Torah—the Jewish Law—and in the crucified Messiah. In this household Rome, Antioch and the older Israel battle out their prejudices and convictions. The Nazarenes sit on a religious fence between Judaism and Christianity, holding firmly to the fifth Gospel—the Gospel according to the Hebrews. The play ends with the marriage of the Roman presbyter to the daughter of the Nazarene leader and holds out the hope that one day the Church will find that Judaism can give it what it lacks and the Synagogue will find it needs the Person of Jesus Christ for fulfilment. Mr. Rubenstein succeeds in adding tenderness to love passages in a boudoir of sanctity. He has a mission but its sincerity is beyond bias.

In Mr. Rubenstein's play a young Nazarene became restive under the Christian passivity preached by his parents and set out to join the pseudo-messiah Bar Cochba in an attack on the Roman rulers of Jerusalem. *The Shepherd and the Hunter* deals with the modern young Jews, more nationalist than faith-conscious, who are rebelling against the present rulers of the Holy Land in an effort to obtain political independence. David Martin has written a well-constructed play based on actuality. It is more likely to explain the present situation in Palestine than columns of communiqués by special correspondents. It is by no means superficial reportage, nor is it special pleading for any faction but a balanced dramatic conflict in which the peaceful Jew as well as the member of the Irgun organisation, the Arab and the occupying power are allowed to plead forcibly their individual causes.

Art Notes

By Edward Sheehy.

PAINTING AND THEORY

There are times when I think that in painting theory matters not at all. I am not talking of theory in its art-school sense ; but of those extraneous ideas by which painters from time to time claim to have been guided or inspired. Superb works of art have grown out of the most divergent theories as to the function of the artist. To the sea-green protagonist of the modern many of these would appear unworthy and therefore automatically stultifying. To day we disapprove of the literary or narrative picture, damning it as mere illustration ; yet the bulk of pre-Renaissance painting and a great deal of Renaissance painting was the exposition of biblical narrative in paint. Or if we assume that here the religious impulse provides the value, we have only to turn to the Dutch school, to Peter Brueghel, Franz Hals, Jordaens, the younger Teniers and a host of lesser figures to find great painting with a purely human, or should I say humanist interest. The modern revolution in painting began in theory. Monet and Pissarro were engaged in applying a scientific theory of light to the problems of the artist's palette : what the eye really sees are the vibrations of refracted light. The shimmering brilliance of Monet's *Rouen Cathedral*, or the dissolving light of his *Gare St. Lazare*, has therefore, as far as theory goes, a scientific basis. In those terms the Impressionists were realists ; at their most intransigent they

painted what they saw without comment. But when we look at the glowing canvasses we realise immediately that it is not the theory itself which counts so much as the liberty which it gave the painter to indulge to the full the sensuous enjoyment of pure colour, uninhibited by studio-conventions. On the other hand we find Turner arriving at much the same palette impelled by a quite extravagant Romanticism.

The Impressionist palette survived Impressionist theory. Too much liberty in the pursuit of pure colour produced the dissolution of form: Monet's cathedral disappears entirely as architecture. The Post-Impressionist reaction theorised therefore about the fundamental importance of structure, going so far in Cubism as to attempt to reduce structure to a number of elementary mathematical forms. On the whole the field of Cubism is arid; but the experiment did achieve another liberation, this time from the realist-classical conventions of form. But here again the theorists did not achieve as much as those painters who were able to utilise the freedom given by the theory.

If we examine the cult of the primitive in sculpture we find the same hidden intention. The genuine primitive was not an artist by intent but by accident. His purpose was not representation (If we except the unaccountable Altamira drawings). He was trying to create a symbol which would express a magical or a religious idea. In doing so he created spiritually significant form out of the available material. It is this element in primitive sculpture which appeals to the modern European educated in a totally different tradition; the appeal becoming potent at a time of rebellion against the Hellenistic tradition which has dominated European art. The growth of vernacular literatures was slow and belated; but Europe has had no vernacular art, apart from a few minor and unimportant exceptions. There is, for instance, no real spiritual difference between the bronze head of Octavia, the sister of Augustus, in the Louvre and any modern portrait head by Rodin, Maillol or Epstein. At most in European art we can point only to local modifications and developments of something that has its roots in the classical spirit. Romanticism, in this context, is merely a palace revolution. The modern sculptor who adopts a style based on the primitive cannot possibly share the intention of the primitive artist. He is restricted to an attempt to capture the formal sensitivity of his adopted prototype. But the real intention of the modern is to find a means of escape from the 'heavy and the weary weight' of tradition.

I think that great painting needs the external stimulus; "art for art's sake" being a contradiction in terms. Provided the stimulus be sufficiently potent it does not seem to matter much what it is; all of which seems to lead to the unphilosophical conclusion that the value of painting lies in the perfection of the means rather than in the relevance of the ends.

There were few exhibitions during January and February though we may expect a spate of them once the Academy has opened. This year's entries will, I am told, include a number of pictures by the better-known English painters. This will be welcome as few here have the opportunity of seeing English work in the original. Anything which widens our horizons is good; though I expect an outburst of xenophobia from those who see the invasion in purely economic or nationalist terms. After all, in art at any rate, invasion can be reciprocal. Both Jack B. Yeats and Louis le Brocquy have had considerable success in London during the past year and the autumn exhibition of Irish painting at the Leicester Galleries was well received.

Tom Nisbet held an exhibition of water-colours at the Grafton Gallery. His chief value lies in his delicate and apparently effortless use of wash which gives his work a feeling of spontaneity. His pictures are pleasantly lyrical, quiet in their simplicity, the pictures, let us say, of a nature-lover who is neither very emotional nor very analytic. His portraits in oils have neither the same certainty nor the same delicacy. In fact it would be difficult to recognise in them the work of the same painter.

Cecil Galbally, at the Victor Waddington Galleries, while not achieving quite the sensational press of his last exhibition, still has considerable popular appeal if we can judge by sales. In this present show there seem to be two painters at work. One is an obvious and deeply influenced disciple of Maurice MacGonigal, in whom a contemplative realism expresses itself in quiet-toned landscapes. He is a careful observer and recorder of subtle colour-harmonies as can be seen in his painting of the warm cornfield in *Harvesting, Innishmore*, or again in his treatment of the cold, wrack-strewn shingle of *Drying Weed, Innishmore*. He can make an effective, if unambitious picture out of the simplest elements, as in *Crimson Door, Innishmore*; though occasionally his choice of subject is apt to be conventional. To this painter of the Irish countryside the other, and urban, painter, bears hardly any recognisable resemblance. There is scarcely one of these urban pictures but betrays some chromatic solecism; the blatant mauves and magentas of *Sandwich-boards and Winter Sunshine* and their repetition in *Backstage*: the violent vermilion to the right of in *Red Bridge, Cork*, which kills the nice balance of a well-composed picture: the salmon-pink road in *On North Gate Bridge, Cork*. It seems to me that where he departs from direct observation of colour he loses both subtlety and consistency. *Snow at Killester*, the *chef d'oeuvre* of the show, purchased recently by the Haverty Trust, is a competent, conventional and uninspiring piece of landscape-painting.

OBITUARY

JIM LARKIN

JIM LARKIN died in Dublin on January 30—the coldest and bitterest day of the year—at the age of seventy-one. The number of people who marched through the city—in slush and snow—to do honour to his memory showed in what respect and affection he was held. Larkin was the last of the leaders in an epoch of social and national struggle. The turbulent part he played in the uprise of Irish Labour will be remembered. The 1913 Labour conflict was his great moment. During that period he succeeded in stamping his image on the life of his times, not only in Ireland but all over the world, as a man who stood defiantly against that industrial servitude which was the lot of the unskilled labourer. "Larkinism" was the name given to a flaming movement of industrial revolt.

Physically Larkin was magnificently equipped as a leader of men. His finely-shaped head, sensitive, expressive face, deep voice, massive shoulders, giant build—he stood over six feet—helped to make him an impressive figure. He could lash his enemies with invective and his voice had all the inflections of pity, indignation and scorn. His poetic and imaginative nature gave depth and

dignity to his words. He was a splendid and moving orator, unequalled I think in the ranks of Labour.

During his fiercest conflict all that was best in the intellect and spirit of Dublin rallied to his side. He gained the friendship of Bernard Shaw, the support of W. B. Yeats, G. W. Russell and many eminent men and women prominent in the literary, artistic and national life. The ultimate issue of that struggle was never in doubt. But it was Larkin who first roused the spirit of self-reliance and manhood among the poorest of the Dublin workers and lit a torch for the whole country. In Ireland, in Britain and in America he worked and suffered for his ideals. In latter years he did a great deal of hard, humdrum work on public boards and in his trade union organisation, gaining the respect of men who did not share his views.

A man's character is often revealed in the smaller things. I like the story of how, one day, Larkin saw a seagull caught in wires opposite his trade union office while a crowd stood idly watching the bird frantically beating itself to death. He phoned at once to the city engineering department telling them to bring ladders and release the bird. The official he spoke to answered angrily that he was not taking orders from Larkin. No doubt Larkin was peremptory. It was often his manner. But he was thinking only of the suffering of the seagull. And he was no Chekov character. His response to suffering—whether human or animal—was immediate and direct, his indignation boundless. There was a core of nobility in this man. Ireland and the world is poorer by his death. Not only the denizens of Dublin dockland raised their grimy fists in salute at his passing.

R. M. Fox.

FORREST REID—A PERSONAL NOTE.

WITH Forrest Reid's death Ireland has lost one of her most distinguished men of letters and many people have lost a friend. For Forrest Reid had at least two great gifts: the gift of writing and appreciating literature and the gift of making and keeping friendships. In Belfast, where he was born and where he spent nearly all his life, a legend grew up that he was a recluse, a 'difficult' person. The opposite was the truth: Forrest Reid liked company and was the most approachable of people.

It is not easy, so soon after his death, for his friends to realize that he is gone. Because he loved youth and was in many ways a boy he gave the impression of being young, though he was over seventy and of recent years his body was frail. Yet his mind remained youthful; and his books captured the spirit of youth, a spirit that pervades his last novel, *Young Tom*.

Forrest Reid knew that he was dying many months before he actually died, but on the many occasions I saw him during these months he hardly ever spoke of death. He remained interested in life, in the things that he had always been interested in—literature, music, painting, friendship, games. During the time he was in hospital he read with gusto some of his favourite authors: he found Jane Austen as entertaining as he had always found her, and he considered Turgenev, as always, a great novelist, and Henry James a master of his art. And he was still eager to discover new novelists and to praise any book he considered worthy of praise. But he didn't follow any fashions, and many current ones—particularly in poetry—displeased and irritated him. I remember, for

instance, with what pleasure he read Mauriac's *A Woman of the Pharisees*, and a French first novel *The Innocents of Paris*; and I remember, too, the distaste which he showed when we discussed the work of a prominent female novelist—"But the woman has no style," he protested, "she has no ear. And she can't write dialogue."

Although his mind was soaked in literature, Greek, English, French, Russian, he was, in a sense, not a literary person at all. He hated people who paraded their book learning, and he had a great respect for active people. He liked people who played games, who were good with their hands, who were unpretentious and unselfconscious. He hated pedants and prigs: and he showed his feelings exactly as a boy would. He said what he thought. But he never spoke unkindly to the sensitive or the unpretentious: he reserved all his harshness for the brutal and the unfeeling.

Forrest Reid lived, on the surface, a very quiet and monotonous life. He was a regular worker, though he never forced his talent; and he seldom left Belfast for more than a month at a time. But if his outward life appeared unexciting, how exciting his actual, interior, imaginative life must have been. It is evident in every page of his books, in *Apostate*, *The Retreat*, *Brian Westly*, *Uncle Stephen*, *Peter Waring*, *Pirates of the Spring*, and all the others—in novel, critical study, essay, and short story. It was evident in the conversation of the man: in his affection for his friends, in his intense love of animals and insects; in his respect for all living things and even of so-called inanimate things who, in his view, had life—the sea and rivers and hills that he loved.

Forrest Reid was a religious man, though his religion was an unorthodox one. For he believed not in one religion but in the spirit that is common to all. He thought of life as a great mystery: and he loved life wherever he found it. He found life in Ancient Greece, and so he was something of a platonist: he found life in the East, and so he loved the quietism of peoples such as the Chinese: and he found life in Ireland, in his native province and city, and so he was unable to leave his home and his friends. And his books, written with loving care and with a rare sense of beauty, will, I believe, endure, just as the memory of the man himself will endure.

J. B.

ERNEST BOYD.

A young, vigorous man, mostly dressed in brown, with a reddish beard, very pleasant, a fine talker, inordinant and sardonic in his understanding of, and his comments on, cods of all sorts. That was Ernest Boyd, well known in the vital, tumultuous, and inspiring Dublin of the post 1916 period.

Boyd was in a large sense of the word an Irish Nationalist, but he made no pretence to any sort of political allegiance of soul. His interest was in literature, in the Irish literary movement, and the dramatic movement, as they were before 1916 and as they were added to by the fervour of the awaking Ireland of 1917 onwards. As literary adviser to *The Talbot Press* he was responsible for that firm's enterprise in the years 1917 to 1920, when it seemed that it would rival Maunsel's as a fosterer of Irish literature. The Poems of MacDonagh and Plunkett, the well known *Every Irishman's Library*, various books of essays by himself, John Eglinton, J. B. Yeats, Darrell Figgis, and a review of Standish O'Grady's

Cuchulain books in three volumes, are amongst the high lights of the Irish publishing of those days. When Boyd left for New York in 1920 it was a loss to Dublin life and to Irish literature.

He was essentially a critic, an acute, sympathetic, but not easily satisfied interpreter of literature. He was most intensely interested in Irish literature, and his few books, *The Irish Literary Renaissance*, 1916 and 1922, and *The Contemporary Drama of Ireland*, 1918, are standard books which seem unlikely to be superseded. He knew, of course, English literature thoroughly, and he had an interest in a great many foreign literatures. After he went to America he did a great deal of work in the way of introducing to the American public foreign masterpieces.

The following is a list of his books, as known to me :—

Ireland's Literary Renaissance. Dublin. 1916. New Revised Ed. N.Y. 1922.

Appreciations and Depreciations, 1917.

The Contemporary Drama of Ireland, 1918.

The Glittering Fake. A Fantasia. 1918.

The Worked-Out Ward. A Sinn Féin Allegory. 1918.

The Sacred Egoism of Sinn Féin. 1918.

Portraits Real and Imaginary. N.Y. 1924.

Studies from Ten Literatures. N.Y. (1925).

Literary Blasphemies. N.Y. 1928.

Studies in Nine Literatures. ("In preparation.")

Guy de Maupassant. A Biographical Study.

Translations.

Les Propos D'Anatole France. By Paul Gsell.

Der Untertan. By Heinrich Mann.

2 x 2 5. By Gustave Wied (in collaboration with Holger A. Kappel).

Editor of :—

The Collected Novels and Stories of Guy de Maupassant.

Germinie Lacerteux. By Edmond and Jules de Goncourt.

There may have been others, and I am not sure whether *Studies in Nine Literatures* was actually published.

P. S. O'HEGARTY.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE LIFE OF EDMUND SPENSER. By Alexander C. Judson. The Johns Hopkins University Press, (London, Geoffrey Cumberlege). 25s 6d. net.

This life of Spenser, a beautifully presented book, handsome in binding and paper, is the introductory volume to a Variorum edition of Spenser's works, sponsored by the Johns Hopkins press, and under the general editorship of Professors Grennlaw, Osgood, Padleford and Heffner. The author, of Indiana University, tells us that "this present life differs most from its predecessors in the attention given to the atmosphere in which Spenser moved," and in pursuit of this end it is marked by all the enthusiasm for detail, the industry and diligence in scholarship which we have come to expect from America.

The author begins by a chapter in which he investigates the family of Spensers of which three daughters, Elizabeth, Anne and Alice, were contemporaries and, perhaps, remote relatives, certainly patronesses of the poet: the careers, marriages and literary interests of these ladies, their patronage of Spenser and his flattery of them is described for us; and, we are told, "his knowledge of alliance with this vigorous noble family must have heightened his dignity and increased his ambition and sense of power." In subsequent chapters all who at any time came in contact, or may be assumed to have come in contact, with the poet are set up for our consideration; their activities, their characters and fortunes touched on, from Richard Mulcaster, the famous headmaster of Merchant Taylor's School, through Cartwright and Whitgift of Cambridge, John Young, Bishop of Rochester, Leicester and Sir Philip Sidney, to Lord Grey, Sir John Norris, and even Hugh O'Neill, whose insurrection lit the flame which drove Spenser, among so many others, from the estates and homes they had made for themselves on foreign soil.

The work is, therefore, a work of research: it is full of information, recondite, curious and sometimes entertaining information and it does build up through this accumulation a general picture of the age. But it is unfortunately also a work of conjecture. As the author cheerfully says at one point, "where facts are lacking inferences are sometimes possible." The number of these inferences, the frequent use of such expressions as:—"If, as seems likely, Spenser were . . .", "to Spenser the whole campaign must have been of intense interest," "It is interesting to speculate on the effect of Harvey's friendship upon Spenser," "Spenser must have acquired other friends during his college days. One of these may have been Edward Kirke.", in addition all the "probablys" and "surely must have's," the "may have beens" and "must have beens" rob us of confidence in the solidity and actuality of what we are reading. This, we feel with a certain irritation, is neither fish nor flesh, neither fiction nor fact; and, while it may display the author's intimacy with the by-ways of history and biography, of antiquities and social customs, it does very little to illumine what should be the centre of his interest, the great writer, "Prince of Poets in his Time," who is so nearly smothered in this build-up of "atmosphere," these solemn incidentals and irrelevancies that we come on any mention of his poetry with a shock of surprise. Moreover, the style of the author, the clichés, the strange, unfortunate, almost comic clumsiness of phrase—as, for example, this:—"the powerful articulate Muse of Spenser," or "much ingenuity was needed to make his estate even moderately successful, for the Munster plantation was proving no Utopia," or "Spenser's first serious experience with the powerful spell of woman," the uncertainty with prepositions, the general plodding pedestrian pace, the lack of light and shade, all this helps to intensify the impression that here we are not in the hands of a master, but of the unskilled if well-intentioned amateur.

But all these defects might pass, if the book were held together by a strong unifying force, a central vision of what Spenser was at, and what his poetry is about. I cannot, however, feel that we need take seriously a work in which *The Faerie Queene*, that extraordinarily complicated, beautiful and great poem, that record of the whole inner experience of a great poet, and the attempts that have been made to get at the heart of its mysteries can be dismissed in such a sentence as:—"No wonder efforts to uncover the secrets of its evolution are

multiplying," or the attraction of the poem for the age be summed up by such a shoddy generalisation as:—"No beauty loving Elizabethan could have been indifferent to the *stylistic splendours of The Faerie Queene*." And when a man can say quite simply of a poem, as Mr. Judson does of the *Epithalamion* that it "oscillates between reality and imagination" we begin to question uneasily how much he understands of the nature of poetry. Therefore, this life of Spenser, in spite of its goodwill, its research, its patient industry, because it illumines neither the poet nor his work, fails to extend our understanding. One is prompted to the conclusion that before we can set ourselves with success to write the life of a poet we ought to have some apprehension of the general nature and purpose of poetry, and a clear appreciation of the particular manifestation which it took in one of its greatest exponents.

LORNA REYNOLDS.

CHARLES AND CROMWELL. By Hugh Ross Williamson. Duckworth and Co., Ltd. 15s. net.

Mr. Williamson's Introduction to his book on Charles and Cromwell fills one with excitement. He says such things as this:—"I can make no pretence of approaching the years 1603 to 1647. with the academic detachment of an impartial scholar. I have been their lover as long as I can remember, and the contemporary world intensifies my nostalgia for them," or this:—"the meaning of history, in so far as it is discoverable at all, is to be found in what people do. It is the story of personalities, not the conditioned reaction of economic man—that abstraction of an abstraction," and again this:—"Buckingham's death closed the first act of the tragedy which ended with Charles's execution, I use the word 'tragedy' advisedly, for the story has something of the sweep and intensity of Greek tragedy." Here, we feel, with mounting enthusiasm, is a work which will sweep up in masterly fashion the disparate and disjointed facts of history, will hold these swarming and floating masses together in the light of a steady vision—what Burckhardt has called "historical vision issuing from the old sources," and the story will take on the gravity and greatness of a tragedy; we shall experience that uplifting and release of spirit which it is the gift of such tragedy to impart.

It is better to say at once that the book disappoints the expectations aroused by the preface. Whether it is that the stubborn facts of history do not lend themselves to the moulding of imagination, or that the writer has not sufficiently unified his matter, or that this particular kind of dual biography is a form in itself awkward and difficult to handle it would be hard to say. But the fact is that the work is not carried along on a strong impetus, is not felt as a whole with parts good in themselves and contributory to the total effect. It has interest: it contains many good incidentals; it diffuses learning and information—and occasional conjecture. But we never feel that either on Charles or Cromwell has the last word been said, nor that the mystery or "cruel necessity" of these two coming into such headlong encounter with such fatal results has been elucidated. Mr. Williamson's style is a little flat and monotonous; it never takes fire; it never rises with the subject: this may in part account for the disappointing effect of the book. But I am inclined to think that the explanation mainly rests on the fact that the author relies too much on the superficial maxim "that it is the people who matter, and the principles are important only as far

as they further an understanding of the people.' One fought at Naseby for either Charles or Cromwell, Mr. Williamson asserts, not for the principle of the Divine Right of Kings. But what then, one feels like asking, did Charles fight for? And in the 17th century, of all centuries, men abounded to whom principles were of the utmost interest; certainly, I dare assert there were not a few who thought a principle worth fighting and dying for.

LORNA REYNOLDS.

SPACE AND SPIRIT. Theories of the Universe and the arguments for the Existence of God. By E. T. Whittaker, Edinburgh. Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1947. Pp. vii + 149. Price 6s.

If Sir Edmund Whittaker had delivered these Donnellan Lectures in the Chapel of Trinity College, as was once the custom, he might have taken for his text, 'The heavens declare the glory of God'. For this theme is that famous argument of natural theology which infers the existence of God from the existence and nature of the universe. He is concerned in particular to examine the Five Ways of St. Thomas in the light of recent developments in physics; and his main conclusion is that 'the deeper understanding of the nature of the material world which has been achieved by scientific discovery, has opened up new prospects and possibilities to the advocate of belief in God.'

The book begins with a brief but lucid account of Greek cosmology with special reference to Aristotle. Sir Edmund then states the Five Ways. Having warned us that these are not meant to be coercive proofs but reasonable arguments, he puts aside the Fourth Way as appealing to ethical considerations; and he apparently rejects the First and Third Ways on grounds of faulty physics and logic. This leaves only the Second and Fifth Ways, viz., the arguments based on causality and order respectively. He then paints a vivid picture of scientific controversy in the Middle Ages, and outlines the discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton and others, throwing into relief those elements in their views which opposed or favoured theism. Coming to our own day, he picks out three chief conclusions of physics with a theistic bearing. First, there are those considerations which point to the universe having had a beginning in time, and this fact, Sir Edmund suggests, indicates a Creation, and a Creator. It also supports the Second Way by excluding an infinite regress, and it rules out pantheism. Secondly, the indeterminism sponsored by some physicists makes it plausible to believe that God's activity in relation to the universe may include not only the original act of creation, but also a 'continual succession of intrusions or new creations'. Thirdly, the extent to which the universe reveals its secrets to the mathematician indicates the handiwork of one rational Being.

In commenting on Sir Edmund's thesis, we may begin with a point of interpretation. Readers of Kant will remember how with unwonted pugnacity he declared his willingness 'to detect the fallacy and destroy the pretensions of every attempt of speculative theology'. Since then, secular philosophers, without necessarily endorsing Kant's arguments, have been apt to regard cosmological theism with the same coolness as a mathematician would greet a new method of squaring the circle. Thus the latest elaborate examination of natural theology, Professor Laird's Gifford Lectures, concludes that a 'limited pantheism' is the most that could be established on cosmological lines. Sir

Edmund is aware of this state of opinion and, as already indicated, urges that St. Thomas' Five Ways should not be treated as 'coercive proofs'. It is doubtful however whether St. Thomas would have accepted this defence. He certainly states his arguments as if they were, to use the words of one eminent neo-Thomist, 'irrefragable demonstrations'.

Some difficulty attaches, I think, to Sir Edmund's treatment of causality. He *seems* to agree with those who regard the concept as banished from science by the combined forces of Hume and Heisenberg; but if so, what becomes of the Second Way with its appeal to efficient causes? He might perhaps answer this objection by distinguishing between the phenomena which the physicist describes, and the 'real being' which, he might say, is the concern of metaphysics; there are hints of such a distinction (pp. 100 and 132f.). But this major problem of philosophy needs more space for its discussion than Sir Edmund was able to give it.

Granting that this causal difficulty can be met, we might well agree that modern physics points to a Creator of cosmic power and superhuman intelligence. But we would still of course have a long way to go before we reach the God of Christian theology; and indeed, as Sir Edmund remarks in a slightly different connection, 'nobody has ever believed in any type of metaphysics leading to theism who did not believe in the theism before he believed in the metaphysics.'

This book will naturally be of interest to the Thomist, and it may be warmly recommended to the reader who needs a concise and well-informed history of cosmological theory. Finally, it is pleasant to observe that its author, as one would expect, treats his subject in the proper spirit, with none of the rather petty cleverness that mars the excursions of some other modern writers into the region of natural theology.

E. J. F.

BEAT DRUM BEAT HEART. By Sheila Wingfield. Cresset Press. 7s. 6d.

LIVING IN TIME. By Kathleen Raine. Nicholson & Watson. 6s.

THE STONES OF THE FIELD. By R. S. Thomas. Druid Press. 6s.

Sheila Wingfield's long poem, *Beat Drum Beat Heart*, is an imaginative analysis of the states of men and women in War, in Love and at Peace. Her method is synthetic, the assembling of many details of vision and feeling, and, in search of universality, she passes from individual to individual in altered times and circumstances. The method precludes the continuous and mounting interest of a single experience and, neither in the structure of the verse, though it is never slipshod, nor in the quality of the emotion, though it is never casual, is there sufficient tension to make the poem an adequate utterance upon so large a theme. Yet, admitting these qualifications, it remains a fine poem, carefully planned and carried through with an austere sincerity. The poet's clear vision of natural and mental phenomena is expressed in passages of lucid economy, and the main theme—the uprising and quickening of the soul to meet the twin catastrophies of Love and War, and its falling away into the poverties and ingloriousness of Peace from either—is brought out with force and clarity. Short quotations from such a poem can only do it an injustice, but here is the concluding passage from the section, *Women in Love*:

By the stretched tendons
Of the two robbers;

By him who loved
 Each incarnate person
 More humbly, more fiercely
 Than soul since or before;
 By the women who stood
 Near those nailed planks—
 We who spoke low
 Under our hoods—
 For pity's sake, no more.

For all its air of delicate precision Miss Raine's verse is strangely impalpable. Her images are not far-fetched, her phrasing is lucid, and yet veils hang between the recorded experience and the reader. This is, perhaps, inevitable, for those experiences are for the most part religious and mystical, and more than delicacy, more than precision are required to suggest the inexpressible. The masculine strength, the vigour and acerbity of a Donne are naturally not to be found in *Living in Time*, nor is there a sufficiently luminous magic to light the heights and depths at which these poems hint. Yet they are, most of them, poems of real quality, intelligent and sensitive, inspired by a firm and seldom sentimental religious feeling. Here are a few lines from *Ecce Homo*:

His long thoughts, from eternity to eternity,
 Took on with human form the human past,
 The astral pattern, matter's forms and laws,
 Man's free-will, the discontinuous electron,
 The slow growth and the sleep of the green tree,
 The instinct and impulse of the nerve,
 And narrow prison of the skeleton;
 All time, all being, the incarnate memory
 Chose, in a world of chance, the identity of God.

Already since her first book, *Stone and Flower*, Miss Raine has moved towards greater simplicity and actuality, and since the sources of her inspiration are likely to be full and lasting, she is a poet of very real potentialities.

Masculine strength is one of the first qualities observable in R. S. Thomas's work. He is a Welsh clergyman, and, as he suggests in *A Priest to His People*, he has learned much from the close, almost antagonistic, study of the peasants whom he serves. The best of his poems are those in which with a dogged, relentless, patient honesty he tries to set down what that study has revealed to him of their natures and their lives. In these poems he comes very close to the work of an Irish poet, Patrick Kavanagh, so close at times that one is tempted to look for a common source beyond the coincidence of two minds racially related working upon a similar theme. Here are the opening lines of Mr. Thomas's *Affinity*:

Consider this man in the field beneath,
 Gatered with mud, lost in his own breath,
 Without joy, without sorrow,
 Without children, without wife,
 Stumbling insensitively from furrow to furrow
 A vague somnambulist; but hold your tears
 For his name also is written in the Book of Life.

The longest poem in the book, *The Airy Tomb*, treats of the same theme as Kavanagh's *The Great Hunger*, and in the manner of approach as well as in phrasing, the poems are closely related. *The Airy Tomb* is a fine poem (marred by some unnecessary rhetorical lines), stark and strong and lit with passages of impassioned poetry. Memorable among verses of a different inspiration are *Memories of Yeats whilst Travelling to Holyhead* ("the embryonic poem still coiled in the ivory skull"); the brilliant little pastiche *On a Portrait by Augustus John*, and the acutely suggestive *Homo Sapiens*, 1941. Mr. Thomas's book will have an appeal for Irish readers which most Englishmen will miss. It is a small book, but rich.

W. P. M.

THE GREEN GARDEN. A new collection of Scottish Poetry. Edited by James Fergusson. Oliver and Boyd. 8s. 6d. net.

To attempt an anthology of Scottish poetry must surely involve the editor with such problems as confront the compiler of Anglo-Irish poetry, with, perhaps, more and even thornier problems. For the Scottish poets, true to the tradition of belonging to a learned race—have used, as the editor reminds us, many languages at different times, not only Scots and English, but Latin, occasionally French, and of course Gaelic. And apart altogether from the latter, probably to assess the Scottish achievement in the main European tradition of poetry the work in Latin and French would need to be considered. But even putting that question aside, what is one to do with what remains? Is the book to be pure Scots, or shall we admit Scottish poets writing in English? Mr. Fergusson has come out in favour of the second plan, states that he has never seen why indubitably Scottish poets who wrote in English should be excluded from a Scottish anthology, declares that his primary aim has been to avoid the beaten track, to find flowers which other searchers have missed, and his secondary to produce a "selection from that body of Scottish poetry which is neither song nor ballad."

The result is an anthology which does indeed bear witness to the age, the indigenous nature of Scottish poetry, to its formality, its learning, its centuries-old tradition, deriving from Chaucer and the French, its technical dexterity and elegance. Scottish poetry lives apart from English poetry; it has an exotic and a foreign grace compared with English; and compared with Anglo-Irish poetry, it has a complete and negligent mastery; there is no "pathetic half-expression" here, no nostalgia, no fixing of the heart on the past, no turning of the eye abroad. The something genial, convivial and social in the Scottish temperament has found expression in their poetry. There is much satire, and topical allusion and a taste for argument. Correspondingly, as compared with English poetry, there are certain losses, a lack of density in the writing, of suggestive power, of mystery, and of that fusion of thought and feeling, or feeling about thought which results in metaphysical poetry. Not often do the Scottish poets give us poems of such passion and intensity of regret as William Dunbar's *Of the Changes of Life*:—

I look about the world unstable
To find ane sentence convenable,
But I cannocht in all my wit
Sae true ane sentence find of it
As say, it is dissalable—

or the great and better known poem *Lament of the Makers*.

To those whose main impression of Scottish poetry has been gathered from Burns, who, close follower of his predecessors though he was, liked to pose as one untutored, singing his wood notes wild, this anthology should come as an enlightenment, a widener of horizons, emphasising, as it does, even in its title, the courtly and learned origins of Scottish poetry, the existence, centuries before Burns, of the professional poet who looked to France and Europe for his teaching and guidance.

LORNA REYNOLDS.

CELTS AND OTHER POEMS. By Sydney Bell. Browne and Nolan. 5s.

MOODS AND PLACES. By M. L. Ormsby. Dundalgan Press. 5s.

SELECTED POEMS. By P. R. Kaikini. Popular Book Depot, Bombay. Rs. 3s.

The first two of these three books are heartening evidence of the recent improvement in Irish book-production and make one hope that we may yet see the standard set by Maunsel and Roberts earlier in the century become the rule and not the exception. In *Celts*, Mr. Sydney Bell, for years an exile in Cyprus, bursts into song, now gay, now sentimental, when he remembers the loveliness of his native land, the richness of its legends, the sweet nature of its inhabitants. The fact of such devotion is pleasantly moving, but its expression by Mr. Bell is at times rather distressing. This stanza from *The Quiet Man* is as fair a sample as any other:

I'm weary now for Glenasmole
Not far from Kilakee,
A man's glen,
The thrushes' glen,
The only glen for me:
The peace of God on Glenasmole,
And I beyond the sea.

It is a painful truth that good-will and kindness and sincerity are not enough to make good verse,—even with generous assistance from Moira O'Neill, Padraic Colum, Eva Gore-Booth and how many more!

M. L. Ormsby's *Moods and Places*, illustrated with attractive wood-cuts and well-printed on excellent paper, is a credit to the Dundalgan Press. The verses are simple, sincere and uneventful. They celebrate the incidents of friendship and family life or make quiet statements on religious subjects. There is no breaking of hearts or bones or the rules of prosody. Perhaps the best stanza in the book occurs in the first poem, *Place of Joy*:

The shining harbour, and little ships,
The path like a Purgatorial ledge
That winds and wanders and mounts and dips
To the sheer cliff-edge.

Something, at the second line there, very nearly happens.

Among a number of enthusiastic comments on Mr. Kaikini's work which the publishers print on the jacket of his *Selected Poems* is one from a London magazine: "Those who look to India for an exotic poetry of pale hands and temple bells will be disappointed by this volume. Young India is as modern as anything that comes out of Bloomsbury or New York." Not only they, but others looking for a beauty independent of the aid of pale hands or temple

bells, will be disappointed by these poems whose modernity is, one supposes, triumphantly proved by dry prose rhythms and occasionally bizarre printing. Their best quality lies in accurate reportage:

A half-nude leper
Squatting on the footpath beside the lotus-lake
Giggles and grunts and grunts and giggles
And salaams you, spreading his dissolving hand.

When Mr. Kaikini leaves the visible world his verses usually become turgid and sometimes ridiculous with misplaced "clever" imagery. Occasionally they rise to near-poetry only to subside suddenly with involuntary deflation. They do, however, express a strong and indignant sympathy with the Indian under-dog, with all under-dogs.

W. P. M.

THE BECKER WIVES AND OTHER STORIES. By Mary Lavin. London: Michael Joseph, Ltd. 9s. 6d. net.

Those who were delighted by Mary Lavin's first two books of short stories, "Tales from Bective Bridge" and "The Long Ago," and disappointed by her long novel, "The House in Clewe Street," are likely to be divided in their feelings about "The Becker Wives," which is made up of two long, and two short, short stories.

The best of these is the title story, and one wonders why it was not published by itself, so as to leave with the reader the impression that it makes, instead of having this taken away almost completely by what follows, in a book whose plan would seem to be a publisher's experiment, rather than what might have been the author's own choice for the shape and contents of her fourth book.

Now it is one of the hardest things in the world to make the right selection from a number of even good short stories and to set them out in the right order, so as to leave an impression of oneness and of the author's full quality upon the reader's mind. And yet there have been some perfect combinations of that kind; indeed Mary Lavin's own first two books were both very good examples of how it can be done.

In "The Becker Wives," however, all sense of that most necessary care seems to be absent. Unbalanced in length and unbalanced in content, its four stories are thrown together anyhow, with disastrous results for three of them, if not for all four. Because when one has found that the story, "A Happy Death" is drawn out to a most unhappy length, and that "The Joy Ride" and "Magenta" could have been included only for the purpose of stretching out the book to a certain arranged number of pages, one turns back to the title story to make sure and finds it not so good as one had thought it at first sight.

One takes another look at Flora, the Becker wife who did not fit in, and finds that although she is merely fantastic and never could have appeared in such a family as the Beckers, the Beckers themselves could never have appeared anywhere, for they are even more unreal. What is wrong then, one asks oneself, and one finds the answer in remembering what was wrong with "The House in Clewe Street," where the people did not seem to belong to any country outside that of the writer's mind and where they moved against no background of real life that one could recognize. For it is the same in "The Becker Wives."

The people of this story are seen with great intensity of imagination at moments, but the light quickly fades from around them, and they do not remain with one, as people who have lived, when the story is over.

That was not quite what happened in Miss Lavin's earlier stories. There the flashes, over a shorter ground in each case, held one as a fine performance does, and it left a memory of its brilliance in two books, even though one did not remember many of their individual stories afterwards.

Miss Lavin's fifth book will be her real test.

B. M.

THE UNFORTUNATE FURSEY. By Mervyn Wall. Pilot Press, Ltd. 8s. 6d. net.

For a nation of satirists, we Irish have always taken ourselves rather seriously. The objects of literary spites, the 'characters' and the dull folk who make up our people, and our collective and particular oppressors at home and abroad have, since Swift's days, been accepted as fair game. But our malice is, unmistakably, one way traffic. A 1014 *And All That* is altogether impossible to-day.

The stock figures in our Brogue's Gallery—the bold peasant, the virtuous Irish girl, the single (and rather simple) minded patriot and so on—have, in spite of some debunking, remained sacrosanct. In the waterglass of piety our political myths are carefully preserved; a joke about the Fir Bolg would probably be thought in bad taste. Still more remote from the threat of humour are our national institutions and ideologies.

Mr. Mervyn Wall in *The Unfortunate Fursey* has had the courage to laugh in the face of so much solemnity. Through the presumption of its monks, the medieval monastery of Clonmacnoise is laid open to an invasion of demons. After the holy men have wrestled (sometimes literally) with temptation, and the Abbot has refused to act "with unbecoming haste," tranquillity is suddenly restored. Then it turns out that the Devil has attached himself and his legions to the unfortunate Brother Fursey, who "possessed the virtue of Holy Simplicity in such a high degree that he was considered unfit for any work other than paring edible roots in the monastery kitchen, and even at that, it could not be truthfully claimed that he excelled."

Fursey is expelled from Clonmacnoise, and the remainder of the story is concerned with his struggles to rid himself of the turbulent demons. Of course, Mr. Wall is on the side of the demons. And, of course, the whole thing is a fantasy; most of the absurdities in the book could only happen, not in the Dark Ages, but in twentieth century Ireland.

Mr. Wall has a style to fit his subject. He tells his story with a straight face, and with that suggestion of pedantry which is the mark of good irony. To take one instance, the unforgettable muscular friar, Furiosus, one of the church militant, grumbles:

"The worst feature is that the 'demons . . . are all of foreign origin. It's a well-authenticated fact that the native Irish demons, whether they be banshees, fairy pipers, leprechauns or pookas, are far superior to the foreign brands. Our demons may be mischievous, but they are everywhere admitted to be as upright and pure in their manner of living as demons can be. The chastity of the Irish demon is well known and everywhere admitted."

Here and there, however, the book shows evidence of being written hastily. Occasionally, when Mr. Wall's zeal in orthodoxy-hunting outruns his discretion,

the humour is a little heavy-handed. The plot is inclined to sag in the middle; and an irrelevant love-interest, which seems to have been an after-thought, rather spoils the delightful closing chapters. It is a pity, too, that Mr. Wall does not exploit more fully the wonderful trains of fauns, lemures, elementals, caco-demons, incubuses and other hellish spirits whom he has summoned from the depths. But it is hardly fair to find fault with a book of such freshness and humour. The satire is clean cut and well directed. Every reader can identify the Aunt Sallys for himself.

GREEN FIELDS. A Journal of Irish Country Life. By Stephen Rynne. Dundalgan Press. 10s. 6d.

Green Fields by Stephen Rynne was first published in 1938 and was then very favourably received. I have read it again now, and see no reason why this new edition should not be equally well received for the trueness and the realness of its treatment of Irish country life, and the delicate fine style still remain. The book is a journal of the days of a Midland farmer, and these highly relevant entries bring one into close touch with the actual routine of the typical Irish farm, on which the farmer has a shot at almost every kind of agricultural operation. The farming is not in itself remarkable, though the author follows the simple sound methods so typical of Ireland. What Mr. Rynne has to offer is not concerned with the science of making two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but with the charm of a countryside and the ways of its people. In this book the lovely old pastoral countryside is deftly sketched, and its complicated but kindly people are written of with understanding by a man who has plenty of humour and a background of culture to help him meet the difficulties of farming life. One gathers that he was not reared in the district where he farms; but the Midland fields could not have raised a son who felt more of their softness, and richness, or more quickly could see the beauty of the trees and hedgerows, which enclose them. This countryside has no great mountains, or wide stretched vistas. But it has the tended fields, and it has the heather covered bogs where many a man can see beauty—not only when the Summer sun falls into a haze on the heather, but even when a thin December light falls on the cold bog pools.

Green Fields will take a high place in the literature of Country Life and my only regret is that Mr. Rynne did not give the places he writes about their own o'd familiar names.

WILLIAM WALSH.

THE SOIL AND HEALTH. A Study of Organic Agriculture. By Sir Albert Howard, C.I.E., M.A. The Devin Adare Company. \$4.00.

Sir Albert Howard has become a great figure in the world of Agriculture. and though his point of view is simple, so much that is difficult is fashionable in modern farming Sir Albert's outlook takes some pressing. He believes in the outstanding virtues of natural manure, composted, as he claims it should be, by mixture with vegetable waste. From the application of such organic manure to the land he claims all the drain on fertility, which crop production entails can be made good, and further that better health will be the good fortune of those nurtured on such crops. This is not merely a technique with the

author, it is a philosophy, for he sees the benefits of nature's process as something on which to found our lives. Sir Albert is not wanting as the leader of his cause, he is forthright and bold in his claims, and challenging to those who differ from him. Much of the matter in the present book is a restatement of views expressed in a previous book, "An Agricultural Testament," but they can bear repetition. Of the merits of Organic Manure there can be no doubt. Yet in reading this book the thought strikes one that the author pushes his point to extremes, for surely the vast knowledge that has been acquired of the chemical components of the soil, and the use of fertilisers to meet shortages of them, can contribute a good deal to successful farming. Admittedly however, the first principle of soil management is to retain fertility by putting back into the land what has come out of the land, and this is what Sir Albert Howard so ably expounds.

WILLIAM WALSH.

ENGLISH WINES AND CORDIALS. By Audre L. Simon. Gramol Publications, Ltd. Price 6s.

MEMORIES OF ENJOYMENT. By Stephen Gwynn. The Kerryman, Ltd. Price 7s. 6d.

The President of the Wines and Food Society, driven by war and post-war rationing of food to compiling simple recipes for *gourmet* palates out of available ingredients which he published in his *Basic English Fare* and which shamed the Ministry of Food's advertised efforts in the same direction, has now in the dearth of French wines, the prevalence of anaemic beers and the expensiveness of obtainable spirits, been impelled to examine the drink situation. He has rummaged among old English recipe books for homely beverages brewed many centuries ago and some of their names, at any rate, are sweeter than any of Rosetti's nominal symphonies: Wine Royal of Red Cherries, Coriander Cordial, Aqua Mirabilis, Marigold Wine, Four Fruits Ratafia. "It would be difficult," says the author, "to follow all these old recipes exactly, but they will stimulate the imagination, and may well inspire present-day readers to experiment in wine-making." It would certainly be difficult, if not impossible, to find the ingredients for Rumpfustian and any stimulation is more likely to be concentrated on the salivary glands. Here is an 1829 recipe for Usquebagh, the Irish Cordial:

To two quarts of the best brandy, or whiskey without a smoky taste, put a pound of stoned raisins, a half-ounce of nutmegs, a quarter ounce of cloves, the same quantity of cardamoms, all bruised in a mortar; the rind of a Seville orange, rubbed off on lumps of sugar, a little tincture of saffron, and a half-pound of brown candy-sugar. Shake the infusion every day for a fortnight, and filter it for use.

A note goes on to say that the Irish cordial is sometimes tinged green with the juice of Spinach instead of the saffron tint from which it takes the name ("as we conjecture") of *usquebeae*, or yellow water. This no doubt must have been an excellent concoction despite the fanciful etymology.

Mr. Stephen Gwynn, in his *Memories of Enjoyment*, helps to support the view that whiskey in the eighteenth century could not have been as we know it to-day. He quotes Swift writing to Gay in 1728:

I would be glad to know for my Lady Bolingbroke whether she will have such Usquebaugh as I can get, and how much, and whether the green or the yellow, for there is no such thing as white.

Many of the essays in Mr. Gwynn's book are given up to the appreciation of wine, a subject on which the author, like Maurice Healy, is an authority. He examines the thirst of Shakespeare and, discussing whether the evidence is sufficient to establish sack (through the French *sec*) as a form of sherry, decides that to the English poet it was a thing to thank God for and meant any valiant and wholesome wine. He has much pleasant chat about the response of the Augustan palate to the vine and makes a plausible case, he knows himself how vain his plea is, for more wine drinking in this country. There are essays here on fishing and on literature as well as memories of writers and political figures he has met throughout a life that is still obviously vital at 83. This is a book to make glad the heart of man; its quiet style captures the moderation of the author's appetite and the modest parade of a rich mind. It is a book easy to read of an evening by the fire or in bed, if one's turf is as sodden as the reviewer's.

A. J. L.

A CLOWDER OF CATS: AN ANTHOLOGY IN PROSE AND POETRY FOR ALL CAT LOVERS: By W. S. Scott: With Drawings by Edwin Smith. John Westhouse. 8s. 6d.

An unusually large number of books on animals have been published recently, which would seem to show that many people, sickened by the spectacle of the brutality, stupidity, and all the boring regimentation of human beings during the war years, sought escape and solace in the gentler and more calming society of horses, cats, or dogs.

"Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented
with the mania of owning things . . .
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth."

Dr. Garnett, the famous Librarian of the British Museum, who was a notorious cat lover, invariably gauged the quality of research students who came to him for advice, by the question "Do you like cats?". If the luckless student replied "Yes—but I prefer dogs," the learned old scholar would dismiss him curtly with only the bare minimum of information. But if the reply was enthusiastically pro-cat, no trouble was too great, and the wealth of the great man's knowledge was poured out with enthusiasm and generosity.

Mr. Scott's delightful anthology provides striking proof of Dr. Garnett's good sense, for he includes in it extracts from the writing in prose and verse of wise and sensitive men and women ranging from Herodotus to modern times. The compiler tells us in his introduction that he began his researches with the idea of a purely eighteenth century collection of cat literature, and although there is much interesting and entertaining cat lore in the other chapters, it is in eighteenth century writings that the book excels. Here are poems by Prior, Gay, Thomson, Cowper, and many other lesser names. A little known treasure is the witty, mock-heroic poem by Joseph Green called "The Poet's Lamentation for the Loss of his Cat," the subject of which must have been the perfect companion for a poet;

"Her purrs and mews so evenly kept time,
She purred in metre, and she mewed in rhyme."

Among the prose writers quoted are Richard Steele who was much addicted to cats, and Parson Woodforde of Diary fame, who tells us how he cured what he calls "a stiony on his eyelid" by rubbing it with the tail of his black tom cat.

In the section entitled "Miscellaneous Cats" I was charmed by the stories told by Gilbert White of Selborne, who possessed true insight into, and sympathy with the lives of animals. One of these relates how a female cat fed and reared a baby hare, her natural prey, with great tenderness:

"As the master was sitting in his garden in the dusk of the evening, he observed his cat with tail erect trotting towards him, and calling with little short notes of complacency, such as they use towards their kittens, and something gambolling after, which proved to be the leveret that the cat had supported with her milk, and continued to support with great affection."

Irish cat lovers will be pleased to find two beautiful passages from "Beasts and Saints" by Helen Waddell; the first "St. Brendan and the Sea Cat" is too long to quote, but the second is both brief and appealing;

"Four Irish Scholars went to sea for the love of God and took nothing with them, only that the youngest said, 'I think I will take the little Cat.'"

The last section of the book entitled "The Best Cat of All" is an English version of "Le Chat Botté" freely adapted by Patrick de Heriz. It is written in a colloquial and unpleasing style, full of snappy wise-cracks. It is a pity that Mr. Scott did not use Robert Samber's easily accessible version, which as well as possessing grace and humour, has a special interest in being almost contemporary with the immortal Perrault himself.

The anthology shows wide reading, and a nice taste in odd and fascinating cat-lore. The drawings by Edwin Smith, of whom the blurb most blasphemously declares that "He has been called the Raphael of cats," are both trivial and facetious, and their presence acts as a recurrent dissonance in an otherwise scholarly and discriminating harmony.

MONA GOODEN.

BOOKS RECEIVED

THE DARK THORN. By Wray Gardiner. Grey Walls Press. 9s. 6d.

LETTERS FROM INDIA. By Alun Lewis. Penmark Press. 15s.

CHOICE. Edited by William Sansom. Progress Publishing. 8s. 6d.

LITTLE REVIEWS ANTHOLOGY. Edited by Denys Val Baker. Eyre and Spottiswood. 9s.

A COUNTRYMAN'S ANTHOLOGY. Edited by Sir William Beach Thomas. Black. 7s. 6d.

COLLECTED POEMS. By Herbert Read. Faber and Faber. 8s. 6d.

THE GOLDEN ASS OF APULIUS. Introduction by Louis MacNeice. Lehmann. 8s. 6d.

BY THE CLOCK 'TIS DAY. Poems by Alan Morton and Desmond Greaves. The Clock House Press. 3s. 6d.

BELSEN UNCOVERED. By Derrick Singleton. Duckworth. 8s. 6d. net.

WAR IN HEAVEN. By Charles Williams. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d. net.

APOSTATE. By Forrest Reid. New edition, with wood engravings by REYNOLDS STONE. Faber and Faber. 10s. 6d. net.

1,000 YEARS OF IRISH POETRY. Edited by Kathleen Hoagland. Devin-Adair, Co. 5 Dollars.

WESTWARD LOOK. Poems by Robert Herring. Maclellan. 6s.

POETRY SCOTLAND. No. 3. Maclellan. 6s.

THE LION RAMPANT. Nos 1 and 2. Maclellan. 1s. each.

HEINE. By Francois Fejto. Allan Wingate. 18s. net.

THE POET'S CAT. An Anthology compiled by Mona Gooden. With a frontispiece engraved by Stephen Gooden. Harrap. 7s. 6d. net.

COOKING QUICKLY. By Philip Harben. John Lane. 6s. net.